

PC Update SOHO

July 1997

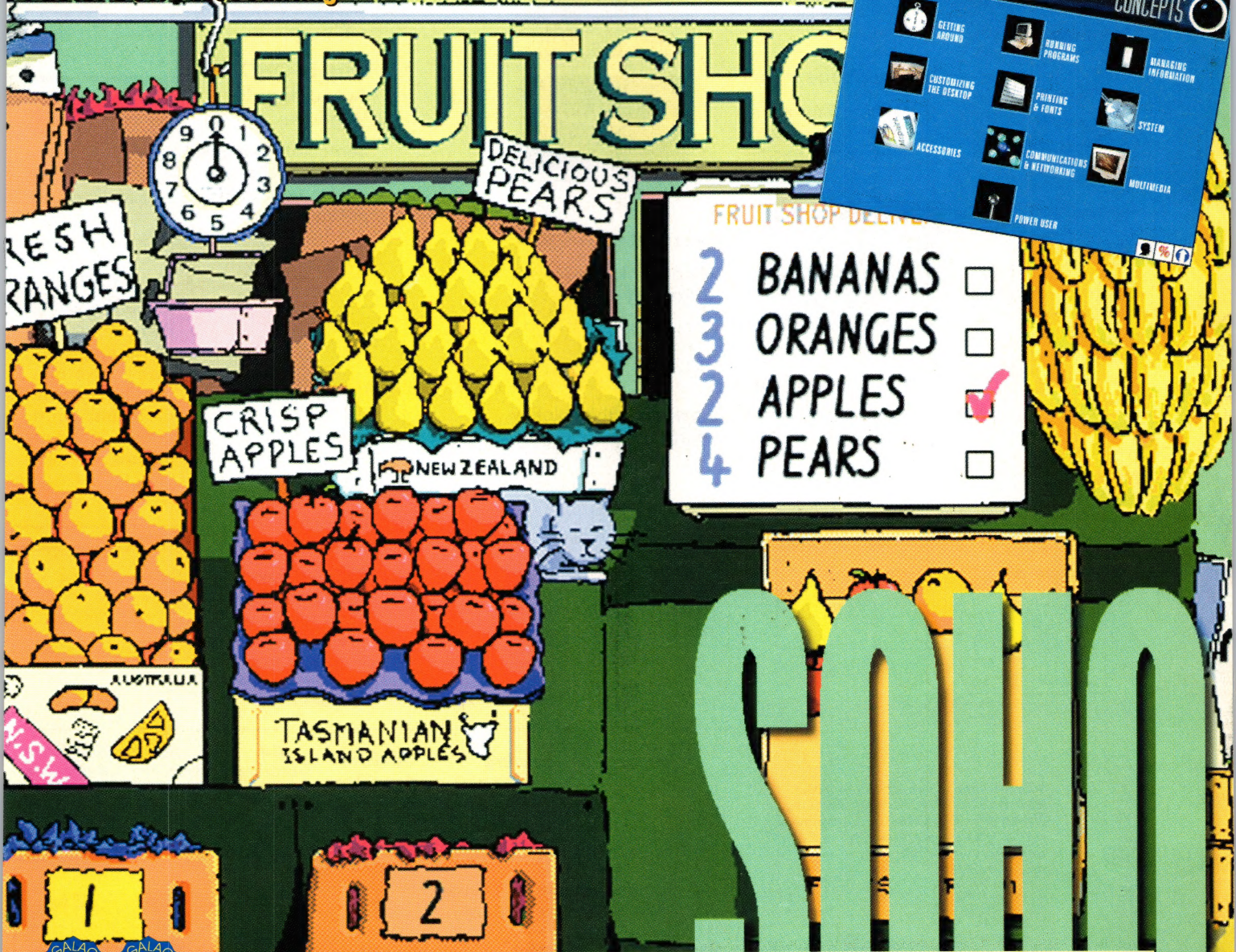
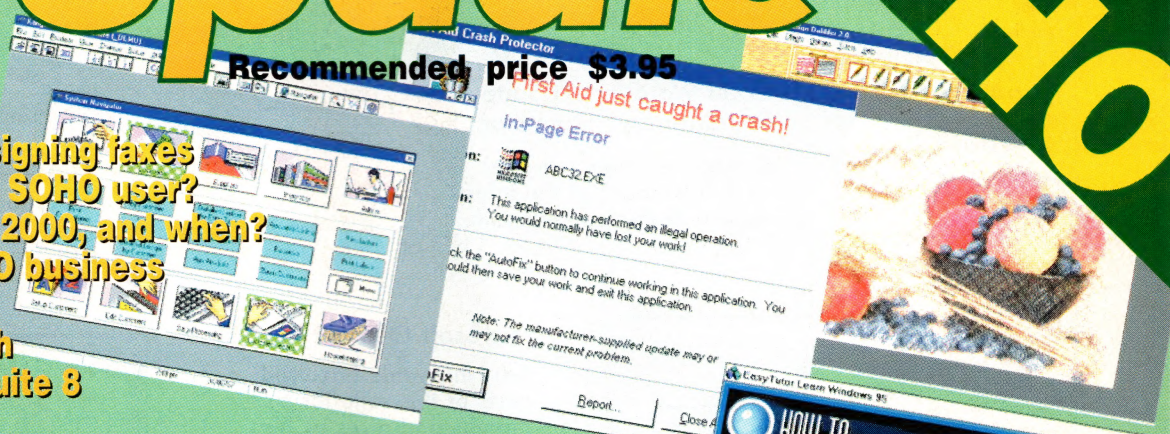
FEATURES

Grabit, macros and signing faxes
Which printer for the SOHO user?
Where will you be in 2000, and when?
Computers and SOHO business

REVIEWS

James Discover Math
Corel WordPerfect Suite 8
Microsoft Office 97
Pastel SOHO Accounting

Recommended price \$3.95



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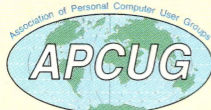
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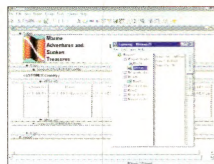
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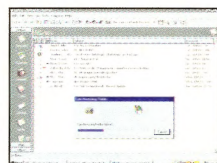
Reviews

8 Corel WordPerfect Suite 8 Standard and Professional

Bernadette Houghton gives us a "first look" at the latest version of this popular suite.

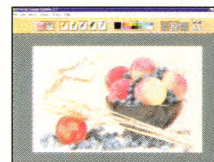


51 James
Discovers Math
Bernadette
Houghton finds
more good,
educational
software.



11 Microsoft Office 97 in use

Ash Nallawalla has used parts of this suite for six months and gives us his impressions.

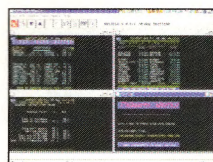


52 Fractal Design Dabbler 2

Bob Burt likes this smooth-running application.

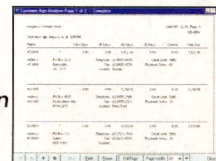
14 Hauppauge Win/TV

George Skarbek's PC and TV/Teletext now communicate.



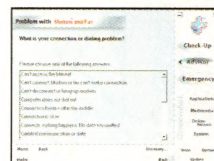
54 Pastel SOHO Accounting for Windows

Bernadette Houghton reviews a cheap, simple accounting package.



18 Learn Windows 95

Gloria Simos reviews a training CD-ROM.

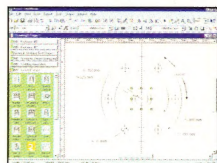


56 First Aid 97

According to Bernadette Houghton, this won't solve all possible system problems, but it goes a long way toward it.

23 DriveCopy

George Skarbek finds the solution to the drive upgrade/copy problem.



49 Visio Technical

Bernadette Houghton reviews drawing package that makes good use of ready-made shapes.

58 Project KickStart v.1.5

Bob Burt says this project management tool is well structured and simple to use.



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October	Upgrading	1 Sep	3 Sep	5 Sep	26 Sep
November	Productivity (Utilities)	6 Oct	8 Oct	10 Oct	31 Oct

Features

- 6** Grabit, macros and signing faxes
Jan Harkin tells us how to use a fax-modem to sign computer-generated faxes.

- 20** Which printer for the home/SOHO user?
Peter Smith looks at the history of the PC printer and compares what the different styles have to offer.

- 22** Where will you be in 2000, and when
Jack Horner discusses some real-life Y2K problems.

- 24** Tips and tricks
More useful information from *George Skarbek*.

- 26** Seeing the Basics:
Visual Basic Bookshelf
Tony Stevenson's series continues.

- 26** Are you looking SCSI lately?
Part 4 of a series by *Fred Townsend*, explaining SCSI.

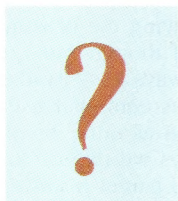
- 42** Computers and SOHO businesses
Rob Pickford explodes a few myths about how small businesses operate.

- 44** Melb PC BBS: Fidonet 10 years on
Philip Lew gives a short history of our BBS.

- 46** Setting up for a PAP login
Lynn Pollock shows how to modify your logon procedures to use the new PAP system.

- 48** Symbolically speaking:
Templates and symbols
Jan Harkin has a useful tip for Word users.

- 62** Peter's PC Update Puzzle
Another brain-teaser from *Peter Smith*. Solve it and be in the running to win a Corel CD-ROM.



Club News

Mailer

Dial Help

- 4** Editorial *Carol Daniels*

- 16** CPU
(Club President's Update)
Stan Johnstone

- 21** Members' free ads

- 30** What does membership of Melb PC offer you?

- 31** Membership and other forms

- 33** Discounts for members

- 34** Special interest group meetings

- 35** SIG meeting reports

- 38** Shareware/Freeware library update
Glenn Webster

- 47** Random access
John Swale

- 60** Training courses

- 60** Byte box

- 63** PC Update advertisers index

- 63** Monthly meeting details

- 63** Acknowledgments

Melb PC directory

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WORKING WRITER'S WORDS

Carol Daniels



Editors—like parents—are supposed to love all their children equally. So I probably shouldn't confess that the Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) issue is one of my personal favourites. One reason I like it so much is that when researching the topic, I always find interesting and inspiring material. Surprise! Editing *PC Update* involves more than writing an editorial once a month. I spend several hours each month reviewing trends and issues related to upcoming themes. I don't believe the enthusiasm I have for this issue is entirely based on the fact that I operate a small business myself. In fact, I rarely find anything that relates to my particular line of business. But I do think that business operators like to read about other peoples successes (and learn from their mistakes).

This month I stumbled upon a trivia question, that went something like this... *How many small-business people would be drastically affected if their computers suffered a catastrophic breakdown?*

My response—all operators of small businesses would be drastically affected if their computers suffered a catastrophic breakdown—reveals at least one thing about my personality.[‡]

To tell you the truth, I don't even remember if I actually read the figures in the answer, because I got sidetracked by a reference to something else, from the US Congressional Budget Office. Their research said that nearly 76.6% of American families own assets, such as stocks, bonds, real estate, businesses and homes that could potentially produce a capital gain. There was some associated information about the proportion of those that used a home PC to track those assets. That made me think about our membership.

It wouldn't surprise me to find all of our members used their computers to track assets, or perform some other vital task—from updating a resume, tracking deadlines, cataloguing collections,

managing stock portfolios or monitoring budgets. A catastrophic computer breakdown could have a significant financial impact on each and every one of us. The process doesn't have to be elaborate or require a dedicated program for the loss to be significant. Nor does the loss have to be financial for it to be significant.

Of course some of our members operate or work in small businesses. As a group, operators of SOHO businesses have a reputation for being eager to implement technological innovations in our businesses.

Even members who use computers primarily in a corporate environment, are finding they are expected to take more responsibility for running a tight ship. Each employee is expected to identify and implement more efficient and effective work practices.

After all that thinking my head was throbbing, but I no longer felt quite so guilty about enjoying the SOHO issue just a little more than some of the others. I decided that, SOHO business operator or not, a good proportion of Melb PC members are probably using their home computers for some SOHO-like activity. Now instead of seeing SOHO as a branch of the business sector, I think of it one step along the continuum from pure hobbyist to corporate computer use.

In addition to relieving me of some of my guilt, this train of thought was quite satisfying. It's not always easy to identify things that unite us as computer users. With a group as large as ours, it's often easier to see the ways we differ. Our membership runs the gamut from highly experienced IT professionals to dead set newbies, from people who comfortably use several different operating systems to those for whom point and click is the only command structure.

Whether we use our computers for fun, profit or a little of both, a desire to use our computers efficiently and effectively unites us. For the SOHO business operator, success can mean the difference between profit and loss. For the hobbyist it can mean the difference between enjoying a task or dreading it. That doesn't make it less important to the hobbyist, just less risky financially.

Here then are three dead simple tips I

**most Melb PC
members are
probably using
home computers
for some SOHO-
like activity . . .**

found this month, they have universal appeal and applicability, and none of them costs a cent to apply.

- Group data files in folders/directories by subject (not application). You'll find it easier and faster to find files if you do. Use sub-folders/directories to further organise your data.
- Archive old files. Dead wood is dead wood, whether it's sitting behind a desk or on your hard drive. Use utilities that can search archived files if you need to access old files with any regularity.
- Mice are nice, but key strokes are quicker. Take a few minutes each day to learn a new keyboard shortcut.

Welcome to the team

On behalf of all Melb PC I'm happy to introduce you to two newcomers to the *PC Update* team.

Bob King (who volunteered to be a proofreader, and with only a little arm twisting agreed to try his hand at sub-editing) is a retired teacher, with experience teaching senior English Expression. His experience makes him a valuable addition to our little team.

Lola Fogarty (who resisted my efforts to convince her to be a sub-editor) is having a go at proofreading for *PC Update*. With her professional experience as an editor and proofreader for Longman, she's a real find.

[‡] I expect trick questions. Armchair psychiatrists are free to deduce whatever else they may from my response, if they

a) promise not to tell me

b) promise not to tell anyone else.

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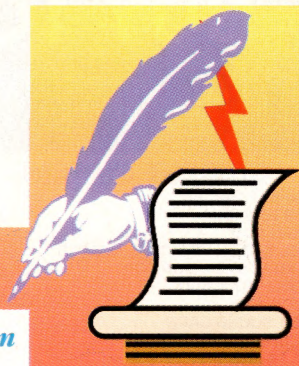


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GrabIt, macros and signing faxes

TUTORIAL

Jan Harkin



A fax-modem is a great space-saver if your desk is anything like mine. But what about when you need to send a letter that has to be signed, perhaps a wonderful suggestion for your local member or a pleading letter to the taxman? You can do it quite simply, using the Windows Clipboard and a screen-capture program called GrabIt. This shareware program is available on the BBS or from the shareware library. Loading it takes about two blinks, with no compatibility problems. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all software loaded so easily. And it won't fill your hard drive either.

Now to capture your signature. First you will need a blank piece of paper. Sign it with your usual signature. Fax it to yourself using a standard fax machine. If you don't have a friend with one or one you can use at work, they are available for public use (for a small charge) at most post offices. Before you leave home to send yourself a fax, make sure you have turned on your computer and set the fax-modem to receive a fax.

When you get home, open the fax and you should see your signature on the screen, along with the blank page and the funny bits and pieces fax machines add at the top and bottom of the page. (Figure 1.) You don't want all of that at the bottom of your letter so you now

have to get rid of the extraneous bits. This is where GrabIt come in.

Start GrabIt. You can do this from the Windows Program Manager. Click on File and Run then Browse. Choose GRABIT.EXE and double click on it. Now minimise GrabIt. Now, get your fax back on screen (you may have to minimise Program Manager to do this).

With your fax up on the screen press PrintScreen. This key appears towards the right hand end of the top row of keys on your keyboard. Nothing will happen. At least nothing obvious. But behind the scenes Clipboard will be running and will now contain a copy of the page you had open, that is your signed piece of paper. Clipboard can copy anything you have open in a program running under Windows. GrabIt lets you edit it. Think of the possibilities. But let's get back to your signature.

Quit your fax-modem program or minimise it, then restore GrabIt.

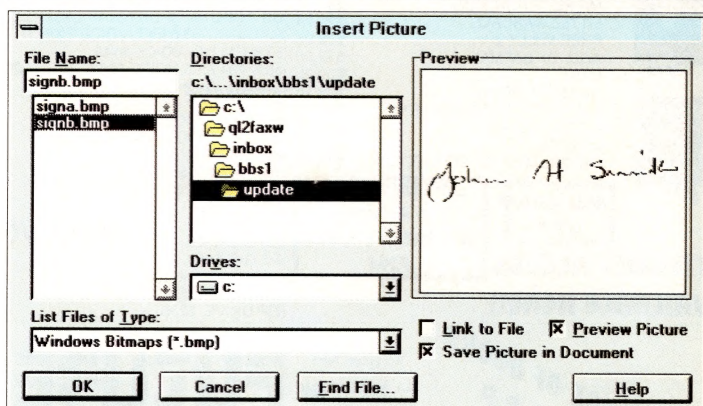
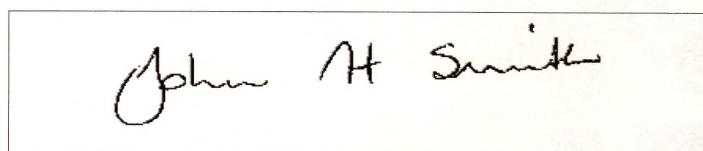
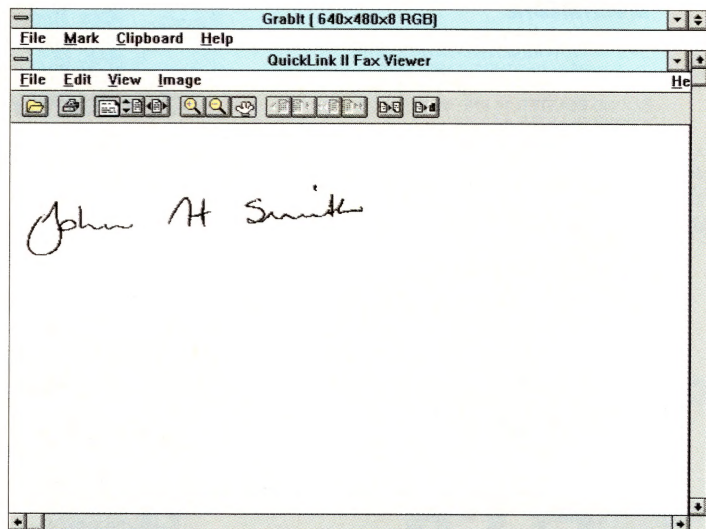
Click on the word Clipboard in the menu bar at the top of the GrabIt screen. Then choose Paste. And there's your signature and all the rest of the bits around it.

Now to edit the screen you have captured. You're going to draw a box around your signature and then save everything inside the box. Click on the top left hand corner of your signature.

How to capture your signature and use it with your fax/modem

Holding the mouse button down drag across to the bottom right hand corner. Your signature should be completely enclosed. Then release the mouse button. Your signature is now ready for saving and using. (Figure 2.)

From the menu bar choose File and then Save. You can give your file a name that's easy to remember, like MYSIGN. But if you share your computer and don't want someone making suggestions to your local MP with your signature attached a more cryptic file name might be safer. Or better still protect the file. The file will be saved with a .BMP extension. It's handy to remember this if you're in the habit of forgetting file names.



Figures 1 (above), 2 (upper right) and 3 (lower right).

Now comes the best part: adding your signature to a letter

Close GrabIt and open your favourite word processor. These instructions are for Microsoft Word for Windows v6, but the basic method will be the same for any program that allows you to add graphic images to your documents.

Type your letter in the usual way. When you get to the end place the cursor where you want your signature to appear. Now click on *Insert* in the top menu bar. Choose *Picture* from the drop-down menu. Type in the name of your signature file and double click. (Figure 3.) If you've forgotten its name already go to the *List Files of Type* section on the bottom left of the picture dialog box and choose *Windows Bitmaps*. Scroll through the files with the extension .BMP until you find the one you want and choose it in the usual way.

Your signature will appear at the end of your document. (Figure 4.)

You're not quite finished yet. Your signature will probably be larger than you want. So now you will need to scale it down to size.

Click on your signature. A box will appear around it with small black nodes at each corner and the midpoint of each side. Click on the bottom right hand node and drag to the left and upwards until the box is about the size you want your signature to be. I reduced mine to 76% wide and 76% high. Make sure you keep the box in proportion so that your signature is not distorted. The size will appear along a bar towards the bottom of the screen to let you know what the height and width have become.

Once you're happy with the size, print your letter and admire your work.

If you don't want to do so much work next time you need your signature faxed you can make things even simpler.

Open a new document. Using the *Window* command change back to the signed letter you have just completed. Select your signature by double clicking it. Click *Edit* and *Copy*. Return to your new document and click *Edit* and *Paste*. Your signature will now appear on a new page. Save this as a file in your word processor directory. Whenever you need your signature you can open this document, copy the signature and paste it into your new letter.

A macro will make this even simpler. A macro is just a small program of "recorded" steps that you can repeat whenever you want to, by clicking an icon on a toolbar, choosing a menu item or using a particular combination of key strokes. If you have never used one you don't know what you are missing.

Some years ago I did a short desktop publishing course.

"Hands up anyone who has never used a macro," the instructor said on the first day. Up came a forest of hands.

"If you worked for me I would sack the lot of you," he said. "You'd be wasting my time." When you use a macro you'll see what he meant. So let's use one now.

In Microsoft Word for Windows v6 click on *Tools*. Choose *Macro* from the drop-down menu. You will need to give the macro a name. MYSIGN will do if security isn't a problem. Now click *record*. You will now be able to assign the macro you are going to create to a toolbar, a menu or the keyboard. Having it on the toolbar's fun so try that first.

Click on *Toolbar*. Now drag the name of your macro to the spot on the toolbar where you would like it to appear. Let go of the mouse button when you're happy with the position. I put mine before the graph icons on the top bar as I don't use graphs in my documents.

Now you get to choose an icon for your macro. I chose the white hand but you can choose anything that takes your fancy. Click on your choice then click on *Assign*. The icon will now appear on the tool bar. (Figure 5.) Click *Close* and you are ready to record your macro.

The cursor will have changed into a little cassette recorder icon. A couple of buttons will have appeared at the top left of the document window. The one on the left will stop the macro recording. The one on the right pauses it. Don't touch them just yet.

Whatever you do now will become part of the macro.

Click on *File* and choose *Open* from the drop-down menu. Open your

signature file, the one saved with the .DOC extension. Click on *Edit* then choose *Copy*. Now click on the left hand macro button to stop the recording. You have now saved a macro that will open the file containing your fully edited signature, and select it ready for pasting into the document of your choice. All at the click of a button.

Try it. Type up a letter in a new document window. Now click on the icon you chose for your signature macro, (for me it's the "white hand").

Bingo.

Your signature will appear. Your letter will have disappeared but don't panic. Use the *Window* command to return to your letter, then click *Edit* and *Paste*. And there's your letter signed just as you wanted. All set for faxing out wherever you want.

If you try GrabIt and want to register it, you should note that the phone number for registration has changed from that in the documentation.

The screen capture shareware program GrabIt is no longer handled by Moon Valley Software Inc.

To register your copy of GrabIt ring Excellence By Design in the USA.
Ph: 0011 1 602 375 9928.

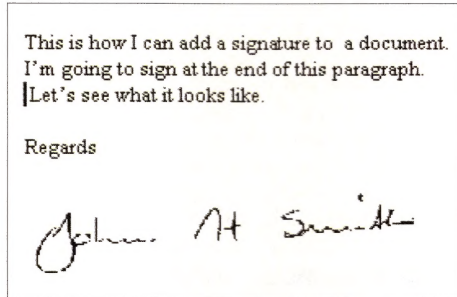


Figure 4.



Figure 5.

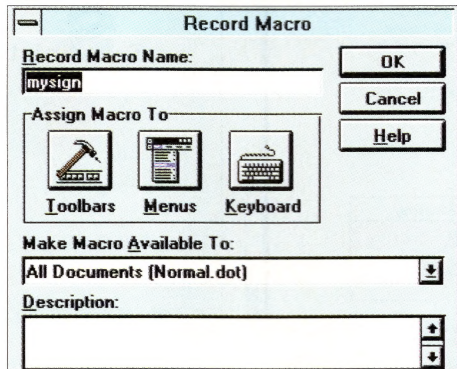


Figure 6.



HUGE COMPUTER SWAP MEETS

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or

ROYAL MELB. SHOWGROUNDS
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Sunday 13th July

Choice of two Swap Meets

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or

BOX HILL TOWN HALL
1022 Whitehorse Rd, Box Hill

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Corel WordPerfect Suite 8 Standard & Professional

FIRST LOOKS

Bernadette Houghton



It's barely 12 months since the release of Corel WordPerfect Suite 7, and already version 8 is imminent. The latest incarnation consolidates a tightly integrated set of applications with a common look-and-feel, shared code and built-in Internet support. Last time around (*PC Update*, July 1996 and February 1997), I didn't see much room for improvement in the integration of the Suite's core applications. Obviously I was wrong because Corel has entwined these applications even more tightly. I looked at an early beta of the Standard and Professional versions of the Suite. Some features were not fully implemented, and the final product may be slightly different from that which I describe here. Keeping this in mind, here are the enhancements you can expect with Corel's newest release.

Both WordPerfect Suite and WordPerfect Suite Professional will include the core applications of

- WordPerfect 8 for word processing
- Quattro Pro 8 for spreadsheet capabilities
- Presentations 8 for presentation graphics as well as
- Envoy 7 (electronic publishing)
- Software Development Kit
- Bitstream Font Navigator
- Fonts, clipart and photos.

WordPerfect Suite will also contain Photo House image-editing software and Netscape 3.0. The Professional version will include Paradox 8, Corel's new personal information manager, CorelCENTRAL, and WEB.SiteBuilder 8. While CorelCENTRAL won't ship with the standard version of the Suite, registered users will be able to obtain a free copy by calling Corel Customer Service.

Overall improvements

Corel is making a concerted effort to enhance performance this time around. If you have an Intel MMX machine, you should notice an even more significant improvement. The MMX technology being built into the core applications will speed up tasks such as opening and closing files, spreadsheet calculations and screen redraws. Space requirements are being reduced, with further optimisation of shared code; Corel is bandying around a figure of 80 MB for a typical "full" installation.

A sharper interface, with new toolbars, menus, dialog boxes and context-sensitive Property Bars (formerly called Power Bars) will promote a seamless feel across applications. If you work in collaboration with others, the new Corel Versions will track document revisions. You'll be able to move between open documents with a single click, and drag information from one document to another by dropping

this latest

revision continues

to consolidate

it on the new Application Bar. While not fully integrated in the beta, the Application Bar will be pretty much a customisable, Suite-wide toolbar, with buttons for currently open documents and general commands such as Printer, Font, Caps Lock and so on.

Internet capabilities are being extended, with each core application having enhanced Web publishing tools. Internet Publisher (in WordPerfect and Presentations) now supports tables (including nested tables), multiple columns and most HTML graphic features. You'll be able to cater for user input on your Web pages, with HTML form support including radio buttons, check boxes, drop down lists and so on. QuickLinks will automatically convert to links any text beginning with standard Internet prefixes

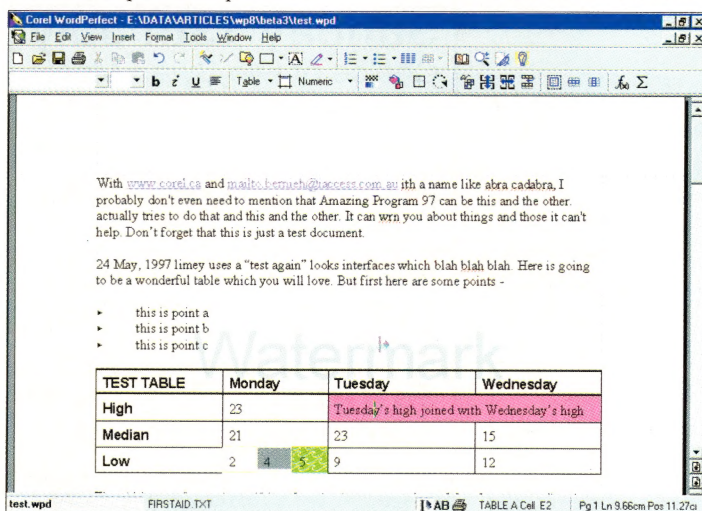


Figure 1. Creating complex tables with WordPerfect. The Application Bar is on the bottom.

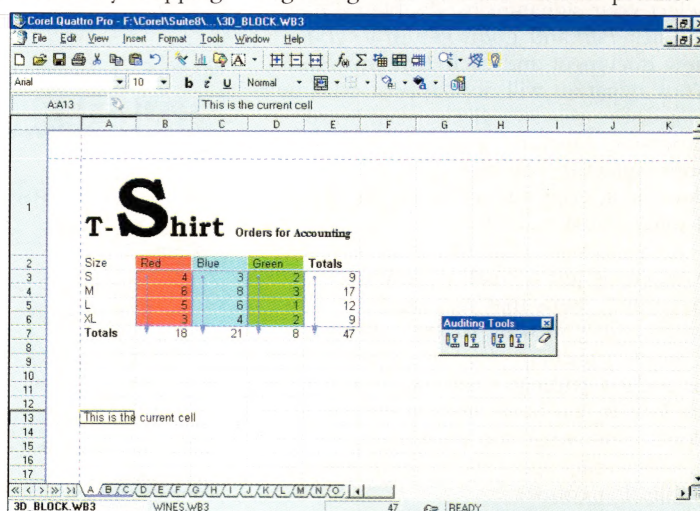


Figure 2. Displaying partial cell relationships in Quattro Pro's new page view. Cell E7 has been dragged to the Application Bar.

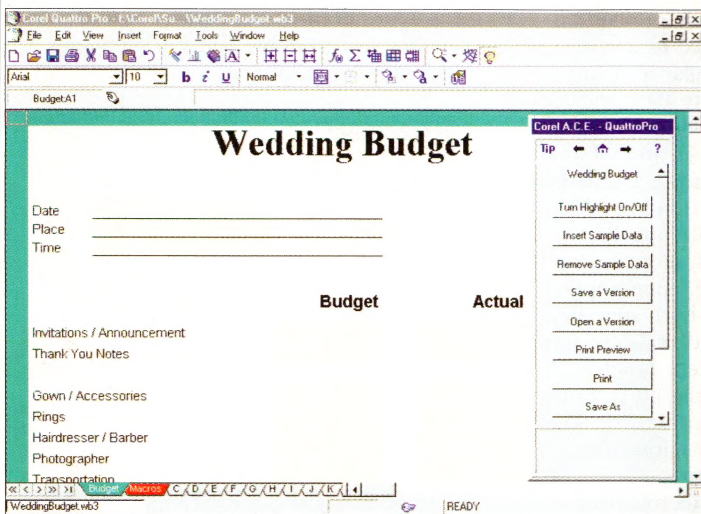


Figure 3. The new PerfectExpert (code-named ACE)

such as www and ftp; click the link and your browser will load and connect to the site. You'll also be able to publish Java-based Web documents—full of sound, animations, transitions and so on—with virtually any Windows 95 application, using the new Corel Barista Printer Driver.

PerfectExpert is undergoing a major facelift and will assist with tasks as well as tools. Previously PerfectExpert and QuickTasks were separate features, but the new PerfectExpert will integrate both. While not fully operational in the beta, PerfectExpert will present as a graphical, context-sensitive menu that offers wizard-type help for common tasks. It will offer tips and sample galleries and integrate with other suite applications. Corel envisages that it will continually add new capabilities to PerfectExpert which you'll be able to download from its Web site. Similarly, you'll be able to connect to a PerfectScript Web page to obtain support and download macros and so on. PerfectScript will also include a useful new macro command to browse Internet locations.

Corel WordPerfect

Apart from the Suite-wide improvements, WordPerfect has its own brag list. You'll be able to customise the appearance of the Shadow Cursor to make it more visible. Grammar-As-You-Go—a companion to Spell-As-You-Go—will check for grammatical errors on the fly and highlight them with wavy blue lines; right click on the error to call up Grammatik for a list of possible replacements.

Not fully implemented in the beta is a new drawing layer which will enable you to draw directly on top of text. All going well, in the final release you'll have access to a range of drawing tools, including the ability to fill objects with colours, patterns and gradients, and group and stack objects.

Hotspots seem to have disappeared, but QuickFonts will still be there, albeit in a different place. You'll be able to view fonts graphically as you move your cursor within the font list—a valuable feature I'm already missing in other applications. Table enhancements include

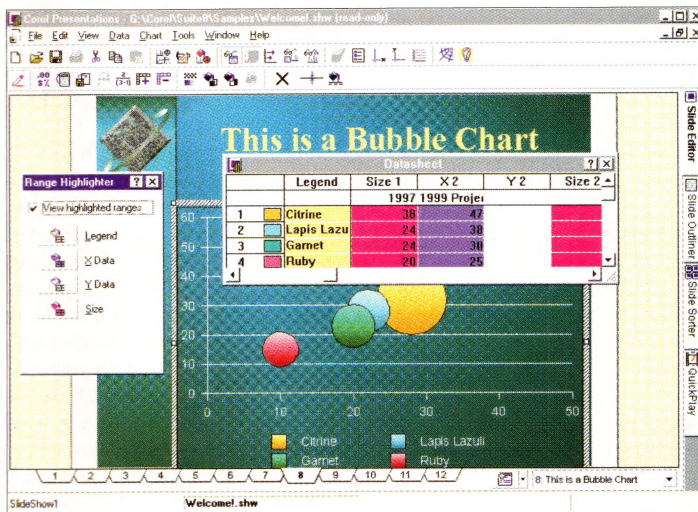


Figure 4. Creating a bubble chart using Presentations' new Range

a new QuickFormat which will enable you to pick up formatting attributes and apply them anywhere in a table. You'll also be able to join adjacent cells, or split a single cell into multiple cells.

There will be no change in file format, so you can continue to share documents with colleagues using WordPerfect 6 and 7. Additionally, WordPerfect's SGML support will enable you to create structured documents in a non-proprietary document format and view their structure graphically.

Corel Quattro Pro

Quattro Pro will include a new Cell Reference Checker to track cells you move or paste, then suggest corrections for cell references that may no longer be valid. Macros and functions will be more accessible on the Property Bar, and you'll be able to drag any cell to the status bar to see how it changes as you update related values. You'll also be able to display cell relationships graphically, group data into collapsible and expandable sets, and omit irrelevant data (e.g. blank

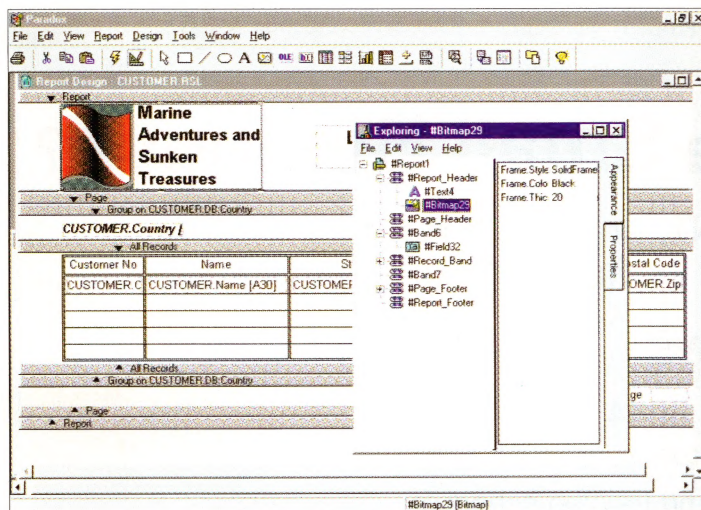


Figure 5. The enhanced Object Explorer in Paradox

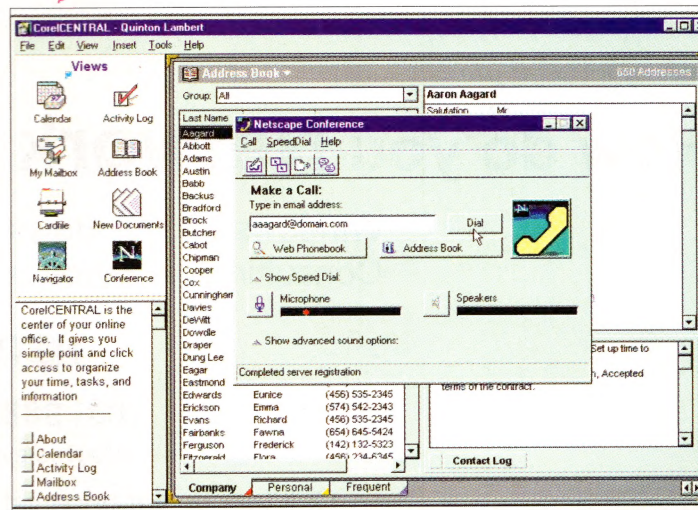


Figure 6. Using Netscape Conference from CorelCENTRAL

lines and cells meeting specified criteria).

As with WordPerfect, you'll be able to join adjacent cells. Additionally, you'll be able to format each cell with multiple fonts, attributes and sizes, and use subscripts and superscripts. A new, editable, WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) page view will enable you to work with your pages as they'll appear when printed. Sure to be much appreciated is the ability to import Quicken files.

New Experts will include a Database Expert to help you build IDAPI (Integrated Database Application Programming Interface) queries directly in Quattro Pro. There will also be an integrated cross-tabs function to help you summarise complex spreadsheets quickly.

Corel Presentations

Presentations will look radically different, with navigation tabs contributing to a sleeker, easy-to-use interface. There will be new transitions, eye-catching new Bubble Charts, and converters for MS PowerPoint. Show On The Go will help you create a portable, runtime slide show which you can distribute via disk or as an e-mail attachment. If you present slide shows to multiple audiences, you'll be able to cater for them all with a single file, as the new Custom Audience feature will enable you to tag slides for specific audiences.

Show It! will publish slide shows to the Web, and Resample Bitmap will adjust a bitmap's resolution after you've resized it. If you aren't too keen on the packaged backgrounds and layouts, you'll now be able to create your own. Creating charts will also be much easier as the new Range Highlighter will highlight columns of your datasheet to match elements of your chart.

Corel Paradox

In the past, Paradox has been pretty much a stand-alone application within the Suite. This time around, Corel hopes to do a much better job of integration. While not fully complete in the beta, the

final release will hopefully present Paradox with a common interface to the rest of the suite, including similar toolbars, menu structure, Property Bars and dialog boxes.

Reports, Project Viewer and Object Explorer interfaces are being updated. New Wizards and Experts are being added (including Internet publishing Experts), as well as a new Application Explorer which will help you generate applications quickly. ObjectPAL will have new library methods, properties and constant types, and SQL will have a query builder. Borland Database Engine 4.0 is being included, along with support for add-in DLLs and database replication. Java capabilities will enable a runtime version of a Paradox database to run from a corporate server, so you'll no longer need to port applications to multiple platforms. Like the core applications, Paradox will include Web-publishing capabilities, and you can choose to publish data once only or have it regenerated each time a browser requests it.

CorelCENTRAL

CorelCENTRAL, available only in demonstration form in the beta, is a personal information manager with all the usual calendaring, scheduling and to-do lists, as well as an address book and a card-file. You'll be able to track personal and workgroup tasks, and CorelCENTRAL will integrate with Netscape Communicator, giving you access to e-mail, newsgroups, Web sites and features such as Internet conferencing and Netscape Collabra.

Corel WEB.SiteBuilder

WEB.SiteBuilder is a WYSIWYG Web page creator. You focus on your site as a single entity rather than as a series of pages, and drag and drop backgrounds, sounds, graphics and pre-formatted HTML components from templates. Corel expects the final release to blend into the rest of the Suite, with a common interface and common tools such as Property Bars and

the PerfectExpert. SiteBuilder will also enable you to download full web sites and view them offline.

Assessment

WordPerfect Suite (and its previous incarnations) has long been at the forefront of application integration and was also the first to build Internet support into its applications. This latest revision continues to consolidate these efforts. Despite the toolbar and menu changes, you shouldn't encounter a dramatic learning curve with any of the core applications. Most of the value in the Standard upgrade will be in enhanced performance, a slimmer footprint and extended Internet capabilities, with the new PerfectExpert a worthwhile help to novices. Paradox's improvements will also add further functionality and productivity to the Professional edition. □

Info Box

Corel WordPerfect Suite 8 Standard & Professional

Minimum system requirements

- 486/66 processor
- 8 MB RAM (16 MB recommended)
- Windows 95
- CD-ROM drive
- VGA monitor
- Mouse or tablet
- 80 MB free hard disk space (preliminary estimate)

Availability and cost

Should be available from most Corel retailers; otherwise, contact Corel Customer Service Centre on 1800 658 850

Standard version

RRP \$549, upgrade \$279

Professional version

RRP \$649, upgrade \$379

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Microsoft Office 97 in use

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Asb Nallawalla



a genuine reason

to upgrade or buy

The most important new feature is Internet compatibility in the shape of document types and linkages. All the modules can create HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) files; links can be the familiar HTTP (hypertext terminal protocol) links or the less familiar FTP (file transfer protocol) links. Another major change is the use of Visual Basic for Applications instead of WordBasic for writing macros (shortcuts).

An overhelpful assistant

Help comes your way when you need it (and sometimes when I don't) in the form of an animated character called the Office Assistant. If you begin typing, say, "Dear Stan," the character pops up and says (quite unnecessarily) "It looks like you are writing a letter" and asks if you need help. If you accept, a letter Wizard pops up and extracts an impressive amount of information about the topic, including matters you may not have considered, such as mailing instructions or a choice of complimentary closures. Once the assistant has "realised" that you have learnt a task, it will not pester you again.

Info Box

Office 97 Professional

Minimum system requirements

- 80486
- Windows 95 or NT 3.51 Service Pack 5 or later
- Windows 95: 8 MB RAM (12 MB for Access); 32 MB is advisable
- NT Workstation: 16 MB RAM
- 73–191 MB hard disk space required
- CD-ROM drive
- VGA video adaptor
- Mouse or compatible pointing device

Optional

- Modem
- Sound system
- Messaging software
- Internet account
- Microsoft Exchange Server for certain tasks in Outlook

Availability and cost

Available in most computer stores.

RRP: \$749

Rather than fill a few pages listing the numerous features of O97, I limit this review to its highlights and to my own observations.

Office 95 (O95) was released a little too soon, in my opinion; it was probably rushed to match the release date of Windows 95. That is why O95 users did not notice many major differences from its predecessor. O97 is a major upgrade, yet operates in the same familiar style, so old hands have little need to attend training courses.

These days, many programs are released on CD-ROM by default, and O97 is no exception. The "door-stop" set of manuals has made way for a single 700-page manual that covers all components, supplemented by a comprehensive online Help file. The program could take well over 200 MB of your hard disk if you installed everything, but I have resigned myself to quadrupling the size of my hard disk every two years.

Related links

O97 home page:
<http://www.microsoft.com/Office/>

O97 free stuff:
<http://www.microsoft.com/OfficeFreeStuff/>

O97 Resource Kit:
<http://www.microsoft.com/Office/ORK/>

Outlook add-ons:
<http://www.microsoft.com/outlook/>

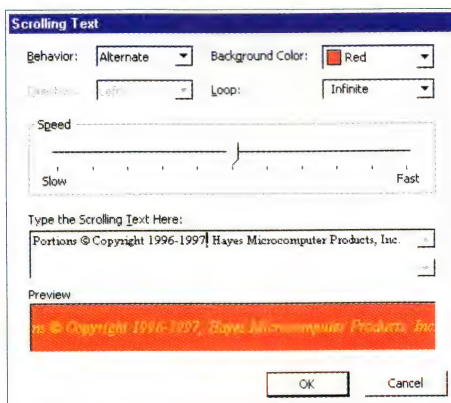


Figure 1. Word's marquee editor

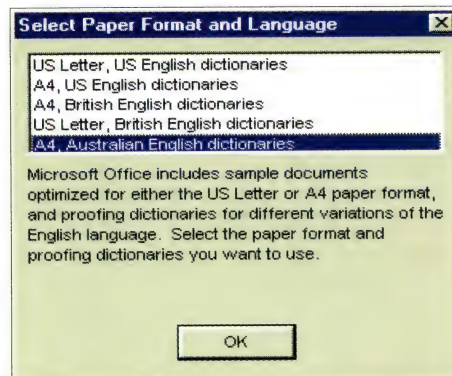


Figure 2. You can check spellings in three flavours of English

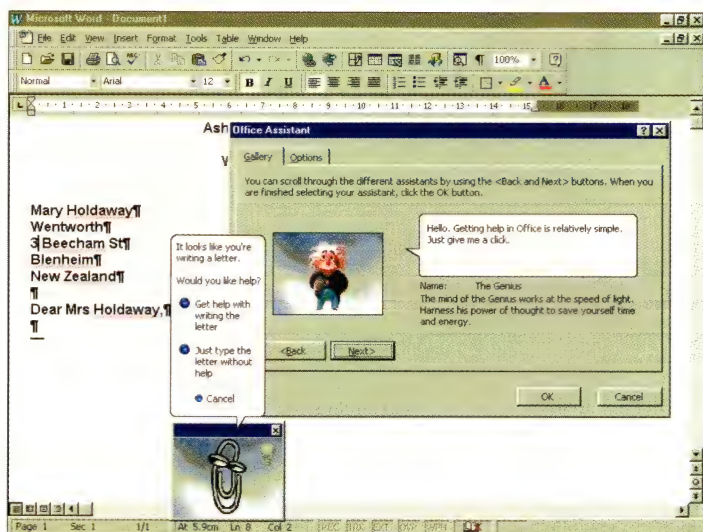


Figure 3. Oh no, here comes that helpful Assistant!

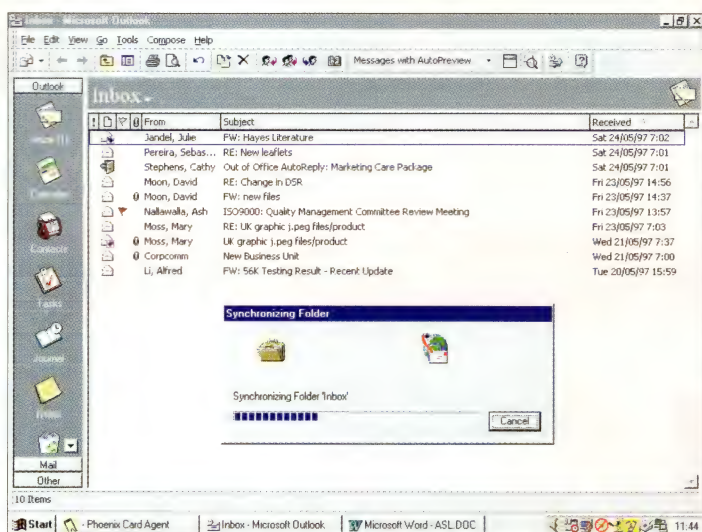


Figure 4. Outlook's mail inbox

Word 97

The user interface for all the components has changed for the better, although I did not have any problems with the previous version. Menu options are mostly where they used to be, or moved to more logical locations.

An interesting new feature (available in all modules) is the Hyperlink. You may know the link from Help text or a Web page; this one can be used to make a web link or a document on a private network. Links are great for offering the reader an option to digress and look at some information in detail.

I believe I invented the concept of the Intranet four years ago (no, don't spoil my dream and tell me someone beat me to it). If I were smarter then, I'd be a rich man. At my previous job I compiled some corporate policy manuals with a Help compiler and placed link icons on my Sydney director's desktop. He didn't think much of the idea, so there died the Intranet, waiting to make someone else rich. Anyway, you don't need a web server to create an Intranet: linked documents can be HTML or O97 files,

down to a specific cell in a spreadsheet.

Tables can be a tricky concept to a newcomer. Now there are two more ways to create them. A "pencil" tool now enables you to draw the approximate shape of the table and it is drawn for you; you can adjust the details later, if you wish. Another nice touch is the icon that inserts a new row or column for you.

Sorting torture test

I needed to sort a 288-page-long list of newsgroups. This was derived from a much larger source file. As I scrolled down the source file (to remove other lines, leaving only the newsgroups), Word ran out of some memory and said it would no longer display grammatical errors. Each pass would sort only a part of the file. The third pass (after minor editing) hung the program and I had to kill the task. Restarting the program enabled me to complete the sorting. In a separate exercise, Word failed to sort a 481-page document at all.

Replacements

In the same large file I needed to reduce the number of blanks that were present

on each line—say about forty per line. I asked the search/replace tool to replace two blanks with one blank. I was disappointed to see that it had made a single pass per line, that is, only half the blanks had disappeared. Other text editors would have removed all but two or three blank spaces per line. A second pass hung the program.

Word as a Web tool

Word 97 is full of pleasant surprises, such as the little dialog box that popped up when I went to edit a marquee (see Figure 1). I would not regard Word 97 as a true HTML editing tool for anything beyond a simple page; however, it does a great job of those small edits to existing documents.

There are minor irritations, such as editing on a "page break" can cause the edited text to be hidden until the page is refreshed. Changing between source and preview modes requires the page to be saved first. Source view always starts not in the "Normal" view, which would be more suitable here, but in a "Page layout" view, which is better suited to a word processing task.

Excel tip

by John Goldstraw and blade@aceweb.net

Path in Footer in Excel

Has anyone wished to be able to show the path, time & date in the footer of Excel sheets, as in Word, for example?

Save this in a module in *Personal.xls* in your \excel\xlstart directory. When Excel loads it, go to Tools/Macro/Options and create a shortcut as you wish; then close. Next, go to Window/Hide and you have a global PathInFooter macro, which you can run at any time, formatted in Arial 6 pt (nice and small).

```
Sub PathInFooter()  
    With ActiveSheet.PageSetup  
        .LeftFooter = "&" "Arial" "&6" & LCase(ActiveSheet.Parent.FullName)  
        .RightFooter = "&" "Arial" "&8&D" & T  
    End With  
End Sub
```

Why MS has not included this yet, even in Excel 97, is a puzzle!

Excel 97

I use Excel mainly to fill out weekly expense claims and design the occasional new form. To my surprise, I tend to use this version to design Web tables (since my Web editor has always been Notepad and I can never remember the syntax).

Outlook

It took me a few months to understand the purpose of Outlook.

Yes, many reviewers said how wonderful it is but didn't convince me *how* it was so.

I don't claim to be completely convinced but I like what I have seen so far. The turning point came when we installed Exchange Server within the company. I found Outlook's e-mail interface to be a little better than that of Windows Messaging (the new name for the Exchange client in Windows 95). Outlook and the Exchange client share many components; for example, when you start the latter, its Help file points to that for Outlook. A friend sent me a patch that adds a preview pane and allows quote symbols to be added to text that is quoted in replies.

I am not impressed by the general approach of Microsoft mail packages (that I have seen) that make you reply *above* the quoted text. The convention on BBSS and the Internet is the opposite. I imagine the explanation is that the recipient does not need to scroll past dozens of lines to read the reply. Now we have all these people using such mailers on the Internet and quoting entire messages below their comment. (Never mind me, this is a lost cause.)

I liked the ability to set up meetings with my colleagues, which is not a new concept but something you don't fully appreciate until you use it.

I imported my old address book from Symantec ACT 2.0. It was mostly a clean, quick process, particularly the way the country code (a separate field in ACT) was appended to the phone number in Outlook. ACT did not have a defined code for "Country", and Outlook ignored

user-defined fields in ACT, so I had to add the country manually. Another minor quirk was that "Mr & Mrs G Smith" was imported (and sorted) as "Mr Mrs & G Smith". Yet, I was happier with the on-screen and printed appearance of the address book than ACT 2.0.

PowerPoint 97

PowerPoint (PP) 97 is a noticeable improvement over the previous version, particularly when it comes to special effects. In a corporate environment one is usually limited to a corporate style, so the generous selection of templates is wasted on me. The sound effects are all well and (quite) good, but few of us travel with amplified loudspeakers, so they remain unused in most of my presentations.

We tend to like trivial features that are important to us and my favourite new feature is the transparency tool. I can now hide the surrounding background in product shots if it is not relevant. You click on the colour that is to be hidden and it becomes transparent—as simple as that!

I tend to re-use some old slides and I like the new Slide Finder, which displays tiny images (thumbnails) so I can choose the ones I need. Previously, I would open the old presentation in Slide Sorter View and pick them from those images.

The main disappointment was that the PP 97 viewer is not available as this is written, five months after release. A viewer is a program you can freely distribute and

which is used to display a presentation. The supplied viewer is for PP 95. This is mentioned in the "Readme" file, which I had not read until I heard complaints from my correspondents.

Access 97

I have only used Access for trivial tasks, such as importing from another data source or using a membership database designed by someone else. It is capable of handling far more complex tasks than I will need to write and is equally easy to use for lightweight work.

Photo Editor

Photo Editor is a handy accessory that is bundled with Office 97. As its name implies, it is useful for editing bitmaps of any type, including scanned images. It can connect with your scanner so that you can start a scan with a click of a button or you can operate your scanner with its own front end software. It is not quite a paint tool, but it has some handy features such as setting transparency and exporting to a different format, which I use for some web images.

Imperfections

I have mentioned earlier that there are some quirks, which is to be expected in such a major package. Apparently, many people have objected to the changes in file formats and the need to use converters when sharing files with previous versions. So, I am not surprised to see a report that a major patch is on its way.

Recommendation

O97 represents a genuine reason to upgrade from an older version, or to buy, if you are making your first purchase. It is integrated with the Internet environment that has enveloped many businesses and homes. Although few people would be maintaining web sites, they may have the need to make small contributions to existing sites and O97 makes this task easy.

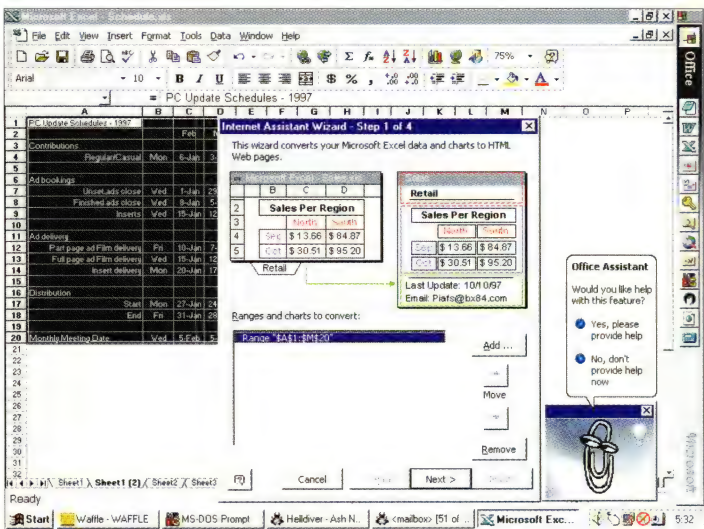


Figure 5. Excel makes a fine Web table editor

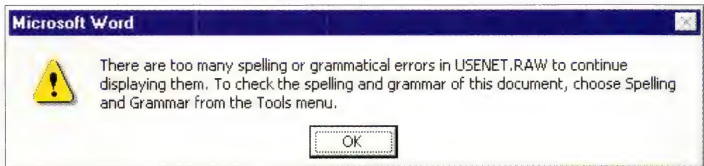


Figure 6. Don't attempt to check a chapter that is several hundred pages long!

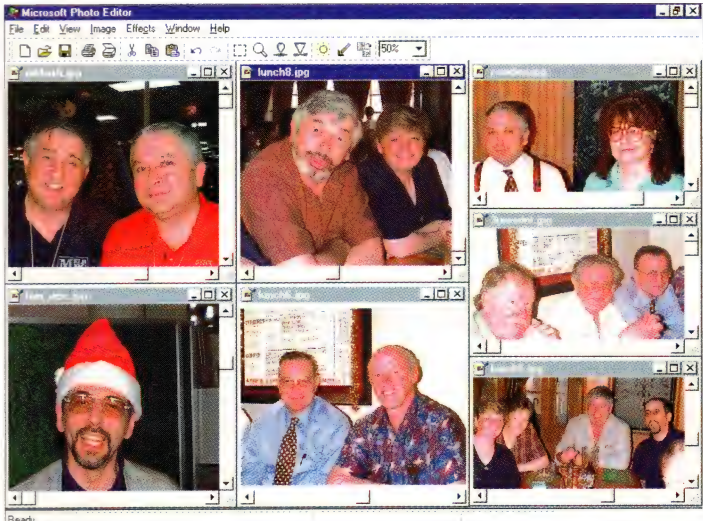
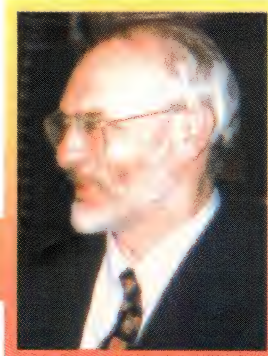


Figure 7. Some Melb PC personalities being examined in Photo Editor

Hauppauge Win/TV

HARDWARE REVIEW

George Skarbek



**I tend to get
distracted so my
productivity drops!**

Info Box

Hauppauge Win/TV

Minimum system requirements

- PCI-based bus-mastering PC
- Windows 95
- Video card supporting direct draw
- Sound card, to hear TV sound

Availability and cost

Available from A Better Computer Solution, which also advertises in *PC Update* as Computer Rebuilds.

Ph: 9428 4413

Fax: 9427 9279

RRP \$299

Recently a company called Hauppauge released a \$299 computer card that you use to display television, on your computer monitor, at full screen or in a movable, scalable window with an image as good as on the TV.

Installation is very easy. Just install the card into a PCI slot in your computer, attach it to a TV antenna and run the setup disk. The hardware is detected automatically and the software will scan for all channels and automatically save the selection. Changing channels, volume, colour balance, contrast is all very easy. Short cut keys exist for switching between full screen and windowed display, adjusting volume and stations. There is no interference between the TV sound and Windows sounds. You can even have the CD playing while watching TV and alter the volumes separately. You can use other Windows applications while watching TV by having a small window in the corner while still typing in your wordprocessor.

TV screens can be captured, saved and used in any graphics-capable program.

As well as watching TV you can simultaneously open numerous Teletext windows (even without the TV picture) and can capture in the background the requested pages. (See Figure 1.)

With Teletext, if one page continues over several sub-pages, all of these are captured and can be very quickly flipped

through from memory. These pages can be saved as text, cut and pasted into your application, or set up as a DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange) so that the data in your spreadsheet is automatically updated. There is also a script language to automate data capture. You can update your PC clock with the time signal from Teletext just by clicking one button. If the TV reception on Channel 7 is good, you will have reliable Teletext data.

You can also program System Agent (if you have Microsoft Plus) to have the TV automatically come on at set times of the day. (For example, to at 6:59 pm to catch the news, see Figure 2.) If you don't have System Agent, you can download an equivalent program from Hauppauge's home page.

The requirements for running the



Figure 2.

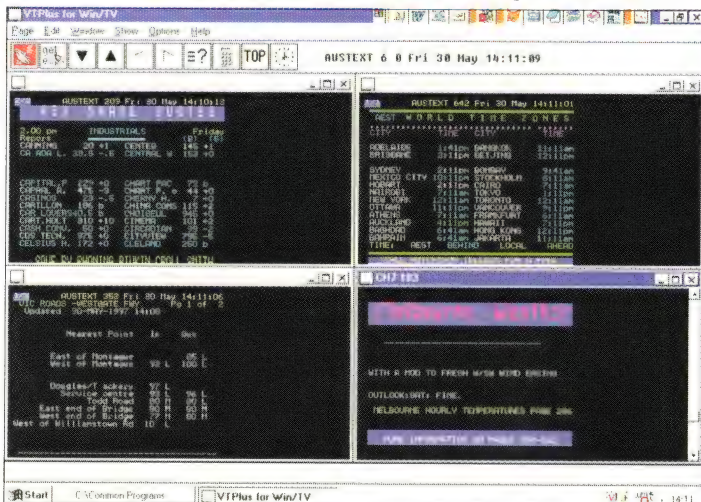


Figure 1.

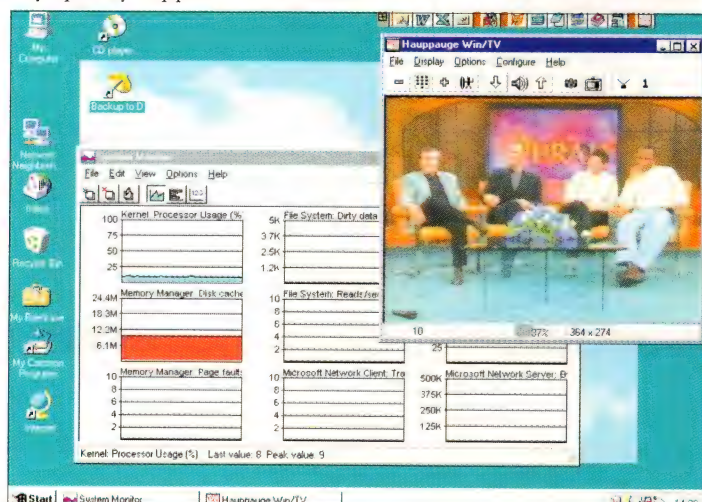


Figure 3.

Hauppauge Win/TV card are

- Windows 95 (with a sound card if you want to listen as well as look at the TV) and a PCI slot on a computer that supports bus mastering. Most new PCI motherboards will have this support. Bus mastering enables the card to bypass the CPU and read or write directly to memory. My tests show that there is no noticeable degradation in performance when displaying TV. (However, I tend to get distracted so my productivity drops!) The CPU resource used by the TV is very low which shows that the TV card is doing all the work and the CPU is free to do other work such as re-calculate large spreadsheets without any degradation. Note the % Processor use in Figure 3.
- Have a spare interrupt available (Click on *Start, Setting, Control Panel, System, Device Manager, Properties*) and check that not all of the interrupts between 2 and 15 are taken. If they are, it may be possible to get the card working, but it could take some fiddling.
- You must have a video card that supports direct draw. Very many do. If you have a very low-cost video card then you may not get a clear image, especially at the full screen resolution, due to the card's inability to process all the video in time. If you get vertical banding, this may be an indication that your video card is struggling. There

will be no problem with the Teletext screen image as the information changes relatively slowly.

The Australian distributor for the Hauppauge Win/TV card is *A Better Computer Solution* in Richmond, Victoria. This business operates from the same premises as regular *PC Update* advertiser, Computer Rebuilds. □

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Morris Tobias has been a member and long-time supporter of Melb PC since 1987. Hundreds of members have benefitted from his expertise.



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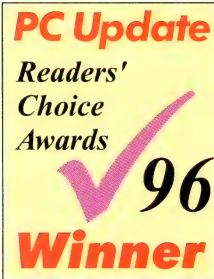
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CLUB PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Stan Johnstone



The big news last month was about a probable move to new premises, followed by a Stop Press announcement that we had been successful in finding what we had been looking for.

Format C:

Starting from scratch is like buying a new machine or formatting a new hard disk with a clean surface, enabling you to create partitions of the sizes you want before loading new and reloading old files into their new location.

Located at 27 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne on the corner of Wells Street (Melway 2F H12) these new premises will in effect give us what we have always wanted—a building of our own. Planning is well under way, and by the time you read this we should have the tender documentation complete. If all goes to plan we should be moving during the latter part of August.

As it turns out the building seems to fall into logical areas for the office, SIGs, training, etc. Although only about 25 per cent larger than our current premises, we will be able to have a larger SIG room as well as gain an additional smaller room so two groups can meet at the same time. We will also have a larger training area, and a larger office and resource area. Most of our existing equipment including air conditioners will be re-used at the new premises, however at the same time we will be able to install a new phone, office network and security system.

As with most property decisions—location was one of the main criteria for the choice. Due to freeway access, the South Melbourne area provides the best access for members travelling from all suburbs and from the country by car, with meter parking freely available during the day, and plenty of free parking at nights and weekends. Public transport is close by with the St. Kilda Rd trams.

Our special thanks go to **Rob Smith** who assisted the committee in finding these premises, and for handling the lease negotiations with the agents.

Naturally we will not be throwing all our equipment away and starting all over, however it will provide us with the opportunity where possible to upgrade

modems to use ISDN and digital connections. Knowing the move was imminent meant that we have had to hold back on changing to this technology, and all additional modems and lines that we purchase will all be of this type bringing benefits to all members.

Home visit assist

Last month I made mention of introducing a new activity of members helping other members in their homes. This brought a very warm response from **Ian Felsenthal** who has experience with his involvement in a similar activity at the University of the Third Age (U3A).

In his work with U3A, Ian was initially somewhat staggered by the number of members who were desperate to join in or update their IT knowledge, but were unable or unwilling to travel for one reason or another. Although the initial reaction was slow, after a few calls or visits with participants, he found the barrier was broken and all the people involved expressed great satisfaction with their work. It also eased many others away from their isolation.

We all need help at some time or another, and it is always appreciated to know you have someone with just a little more knowledge than your own, from whom you can learn, or even just to bounce an idea off or get a second opinion.

Perhaps the nicest part to come from Ian Felsenthal's letter was his offer to assist in organising this activity, drawing on his own earlier U3A experience. This is greatly appreciated, and without help such as this we would not be able to introduce new ideas such as this into Melb PC.

Again I invite members to write to me either as a "visitor" or "visitee", and with Ian's help we hope we will be able to help more users. Isn't that what Melb PC is all about?

Dial help for remote members

Using e-mail for Dial Help assistance was another idea I raised last month.

Following the suggestion of a country member as a means it to overcome STD charges. The first call for help came across the Tasman from David Phillips in

**we should be
moving during
the latter part
of August**

New Zealand, with a Word for Windows problem that he could not find the solution for, and he was tired of holding on at IDD rates waiting for an answer from the vendors in Sydney.

Not being overwhelmed with offers for help so far, I passed David's question on to one of our word-processing trainers for the answer. I trust he was answered satisfactorily.

However the very first response was from **Gordon Woolf** from Rutherglen offering his services to assist with Pagemaker queries. So it is not a matter of seeking help from afar, instead it also shows how remote members can equally provide help.

The e-mail address dialhelp@melbpc.org.au is there for you to offer your services or to seek help. In the meantime, you will probably find the phone is faster and probably more satisfactory if help is near to hand.

BBS

I commend to you **Phil Lew's** article in this issue of *PC Update* about the history of our BBS. In real terms it is not "free" as he describes it, but its running costs form part of your membership fee, as it is not self-supporting as are many other activities.

A recent look at the BBS user listing suggests that only about a third of our members have used this service during this year. The BBS is a wonderful resource for obtaining shareware and all manner

of material, however at the moment it appears to be under-utilised. Although many BBSS worldwide are closing down, the Melb PC BBS was built with a lot of time and sweat, and its worth should not be wasted.

Back in January of this year, the BBS team approached the committee with the recommendation to adopt Wildcat5 as the new operating system. Wildcat5 is being adopted worldwide as the new "standard" for BBS services, and its GUI interface is more familiar to modern communications users. The team mentioned that the current Maximus operating system was no longer supported by its creators, our current installation had reached its absolute limit, and noted that we were in a delicate situation should the system fail.

Approval was given, and the software and a new Pentium Pro machine were obtained. The intention was that Stage 1 of the project would replicate the current BBS system with files and message areas, and it was planned to be up and running in parallel during a testing phase by the end of May 1997. The exciting later development in Stage 2 shortly afterwards would be the introduction of e-mail services for members not wishing the full Internet service.

It is most unfortunate that this work has fallen so far behind that the best estimate they can now give is "late this year" for Stage 1. This is most disappointing! I had the opportunity to try the evaluation version of Wildcat prepared by Richard Solly late last year, and I am particularly disappointed that this new system is still not available to members to share.

In the meantime, I encourage all members to use the BBS. In particular the files areas where users can obtain most of the latest software files available from all over the world. These can be retrieved at a much faster and cheaper rate than is possible using the Internet.

A letter from David Linke during the month detailed his problems in trying to learn to use the BBS as a new user. With communications programs as part of the Windows

package, many users tend to take communicating with our own and other BBSS for granted. Unfortunately, we have not had anyone listed for BBS Dial Help assistance for quite some time, however Lynn Pollock runs regular training courses on "Using the Melb PC BBS".

Orientation days

The next day for members and their friends to come and see where and what happens at Melb PC will be on Saturday 12 July 1997 starting at 10 am.

I certainly enjoy these days where I meet members who I only know by a "username", and it is rewarding to see how many long-time members use these orientation days to visit the office for the first time.

We try to keep it to two hours, but question time often makes us run over. This will probably be the last at this address—next month we will probably be in a state ready to move.

Please ring the office at (03) 9699 6222 to make a booking for this free session so we can ensure we have enough room.

Seminar nights

The three-hour seminar training sessions continue to attract large numbers. The next on Friday 18 July 1997 starting at 6.30 pm will be *Computer Basics for New Users*.

At a cost of \$15 these sessions provide an excellent opportunity to learn and ask the questions you want answered. Bookings are essential at the office on (03) 9699 6222.

Ideas or suggestions for new courses are welcomed—e-mail your ideas to training@melbpc.org.au, send a letter to the Training Co-ordinator, Melbourne PC User Group, PO Box 283, South Melbourne 3205, or fax to (03) 9699 6499.

On to next month

By next month we should be well advanced in our preparations for the move to the new premises. So until then, it's back to the drawing board.
Best wishes,
Stan



Special diary dates

When: Saturday 12 July 10.00 am.	When: Friday 18 July 6.30 pm
What: Member's orientation day—visit the office and see what goes on there.	What: Seminar-format course: <i>Computer Basics for New Users</i>
Length: About two hours	Length: Three hours
Cost: Free	Cost: \$15
Where: Melb PC 66 Albert Road South Melbourne	Where: Melb PC 66 Albert Road South Melbourne
Book: (03) 9699 6222	Book: (03) 9699 6222

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Learn Windows 95

CD-ROM TRAINING REVIEW

Gloria Simos



I used the Easy Tutor "Learn Windows 95" CD-ROM training course one year after having installed Windows 95 on my PC. When I first installed Win 95 a friend gave me another Win 95 course on a CD-ROM which proved to be a complete waste of time. It consisted of a pair of talking heads extolling the virtues of the system and presenting only an overview of the features. It was not my idea of a training course.

The Easy Tutor version is a different kettle of fish. It doesn't contain any talk-

ing heads and it takes you far beyond the overview stage. I was surprised to find it included a brief demo of registry editing. I would have appreciated it much more a year ago when I really needed it. Even now, it still managed to teach me some things about Win 95 that I didn't know. It won't turn you into a super-user, but if you are just starting with Win 95 it will get you over that initial hump in the learning curve.

Expect to spend half a day with this CD-ROM, if, as well as doing the practical activities, you occasionally swap into Win 95 on your PC, rather than confining yourself to the set activities in the pseudo Win 95 on the CD-ROM. It is priced at the level of a three-hour course with an instructor, but with some added advantages. You can do the topics at your own pace and, if necessary, re-do them if they don't sink in, without the rest of the class knowing, and other family members can do it for free, provided of course, it is used on a single PC.

Get a head start on learning Win 95

You do not need to have Win 95 on your PC as long as you have Windows 3.1 and 4 MB RAM. You can run the course directly from the CD-ROM.

Course description

Easy Tutor contains ten groups of topics as shown in Figure 1.

Using the "How to" option, each topic starts with an explanation of the function.

You can sit back and allow the system to "demo" (with voice-over) but if you use the "try it" option and follow the voice instructions you get brownie points in the form of a tick next to the item. Of course you can both "demo" and "try it" for maximum effect.

Often the description of the function includes multiple methods of doing a task but the "demo" and "try it" show one only. This is where, if you have Win 95 on your PC, you can swap over to your version of Win 95 to try out the other methods.

**useful if you're
upgrading from**

Win 3.1 to Win 95

Other buttons provide access to Windows 3.1 equivalent tasks and a detailed glossary.

The "Concept" option was a disappointment. It is supposed to "help you understand the benefits of what you have learned." Unfortunately it is little more than a showcase for someone's cartoon graphics. The kids might like it but having tried a few examples I found their "animated storyboard" irritating.

After you have completed one or more modules you can return to the initial screen to test yourself on what you have learnt. If you have been using the "demo" option then the system doesn't have a record of your progress so the questions are at random. Questions are asked in sets of ten and the system pats you on the back even if you get two out of ten right.

Try these two!

- What is the largest file size that the MS-DOS editor will open?
- How do you start Program Manager under Windows 95?

Program Manager under Win 95 is interesting. As a Windows 3.1 user, I always kept it neat and tidy. I didn't even know it still existed in Win 95 and that for the past year it has been accumulating windows in the background on my PC. It no longer serves any useful purpose but it would have been comforting in the early days—after the conversion to Win 95—to know that it was still available.

Conclusion

This training CD-ROM would be appropriate for a person who has already used Windows 3.1 and plans to or has just upgraded to Win 95. It is not suited to users who are starting their Windows experience, from scratch with Win 95. □

Info Box

Learn Windows 95

Minimum system requirements

- 486 SX
- 4 MB RAM
- 2 MB of hard disk space
- CD-ROM
- Sound card
- VGA monitor with 256 colours

Availability and cost

The review copy was supplied by
Mannacom Pty Ltd
Unit 23 Milton Village
Lang Parade
Milton QLD 4064
Ph: (07) 3870 4900
RRP: \$49.95

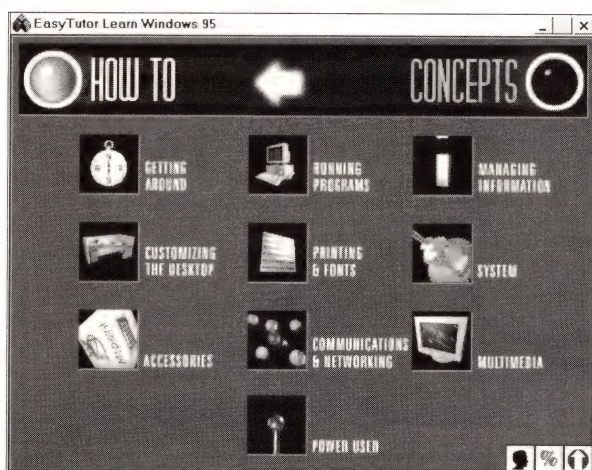
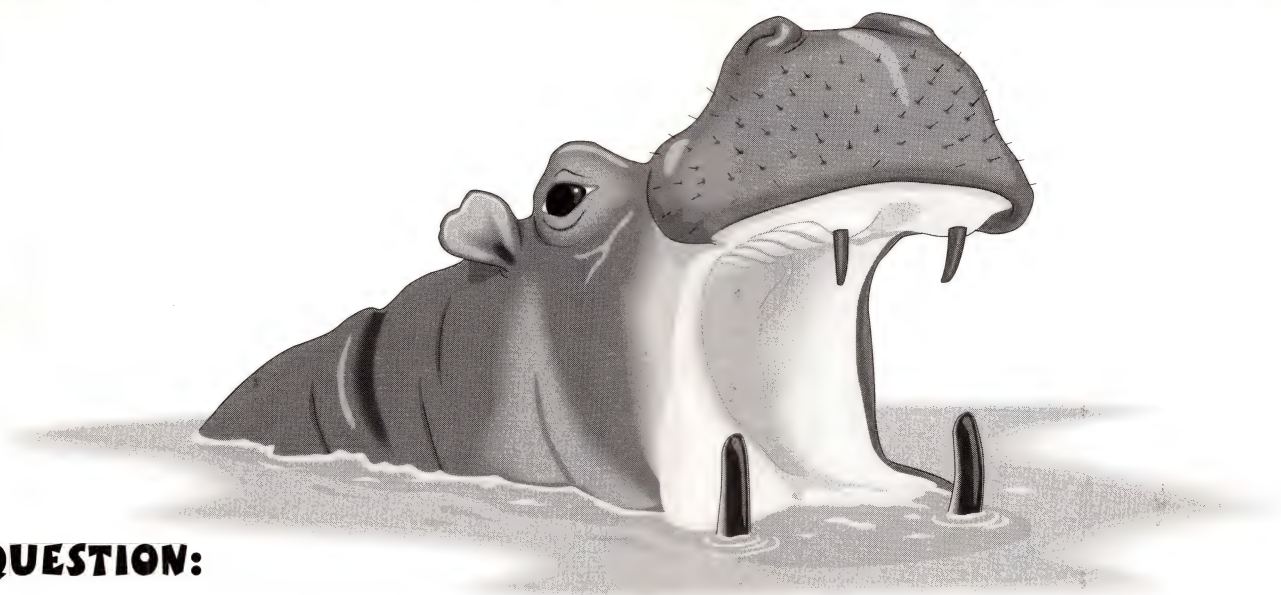


Figure 1.



QUESTION:

What does a hippopotamus have in common with a  Hayes modem?

ANSWER:

*Nothing really...
But check out the deal below!*

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Which printer for the home/SOHO user?

NOW AND THEN



Peter Smith

there is not much

that a laser can

do that you can't

do on an inkjet

What type of printer should a home or SOHO (small office, home office) computer user choose—inkjet, laser or dot-matrix, or possibly an “all-in-one” fax/scanner/copier/printer? What's good or not-so-good in this bewildering array of printing options?

Everything on the market excels at something—but is it what you want? Printers enjoy the same price reduction, performance improvement and increase in quality as the rest of the computer industry. For what you spend today, next month you will get more features or faster output or better quality, if not all three.

Some years back there were few printed computer output choices. Most mainframes or mid-range computers had line printers—chewing through huge volumes of low-quality continuous stationery and printing everything in capital letters. PC users could choose continuous-stationery dot-matrix printers or very expensive A4 cut-sheet laser printers. As we began to use PCs for correspondence, the “electronic typewriter” or daisywheel printer enjoyed a brief career.

Today we choose from ribbon-based dot matrix printers, inkjet printers, thermal printers, black-and-white and colour laser printers, and other specialised colour printers using techniques such as dye-sublimation. The major casualty has been

the daisy wheel, which, in its time, provided the highest quality. However, it was the least flexible technology and now rests quietly with other 70s and 80s memorabilia. The daisy wheel was the only low-end device to print fully-formed characters, everything else makes characters by generating arrays of dots—although some of these are as small as 0.008 mm in diameter.

Different printers satisfy different needs. Each has its advantages and weaknesses. A one-person office, a family or a SOHO business can often justify two printers to best meet different requirements, particularly now that top-quality inkjet and laser printers can cost under \$1000.

Dot-Matrix

Dot-matrix printers have the lowest per-page cost. Most handle both continuous and cut-sheet paper. They excel where ultimate print quality is not an overriding concern, there is no need for high-quality graphics or where the printer is mostly dedicated to a single job. This is the only technology that handles multipart stationery, such as the delivery dockets used by courier companies. Ribbons are cheap, often under \$10, lasting many hundreds or thousands of pages. Any form of quality printing takes minutes per page. On the other hand, they produce excellent throughput when used in a form-filling role, with a few hundred characters printed on a page. Their other major use is for correspondence, where using NLQ (near letter quality) mode produces crispness approaching that of inkjets and lasers, although with less variety, but at a much lower per-copy cost.

Epson's product list is evidence of the lasting strength of the dot-matrix market. Many years ago it produced the first consumer-level dot matrix printer—the MX-80. Today it still supplies around a dozen different dot-matrix models. Although dot-matrix printers once dominated the SOHO/domestic market, their market share was only 15% in 1996 and is dropping.

Several manufacturers make dot-matrix printers that print in colour using special ribbons, but they have limited usefulness, mainly in applications where tonal range and accuracy are unimportant.

Thermal

The next technology to appear, briefly, was the thermal printer. This was before the days of the best-known thermal printer—the fax machine. These early printers were quieter than dot-matrix, and had no ribbons to wear out, fade or dry up. Before faxes, thermal paper was prohibitively expensive and the technology languished. It is now resurfacing in the mobile market. Low power requirements make lightweight, battery-powered, portable printers a reality. Inkjet printers are also becoming a force in that market and thermal printing will again decline.

Thermal paper has some big disadvantages

- Its propensity to fade in sunlight or when placed against certain plastics
- Its “chalky” feel
- It's awkward to write on with a ballpoint or pencil.

Laser

Laser printers enabled the desktop publishing revolution, consequently initiating the information explosion. They offer incredible flexibility in their ability to produce graphics, halftone images (photographs), and type, all in any size or orientation. They have speeds from a few pages per minute to over 100 pages per minute. Laser printer technology now extends into colour, with impressive results. The laser printing share of the market is growing—about 20% of the home/SOHO market and much higher in large businesses.

Laser printing technology evolved from the photocopier and suffers the same problems. Paper must withstand high temperatures as toner particles fuse to it, it must be light (thin) enough to heat properly in the fusion process and it must be smooth enough for toner to adhere. There are many specialty papers, both plain and preprinted, satisfying these requirements.

You need to be wary of plastics that have an affinity for toner, removing it from laser-printed pages when they are left in contact for too long. Damage occurs to both the plastic and the printed page.

Toner costs range from a cent or two per page (for expensive laser printers) to ten cents per page for small-throughput, low-cost models. Costs also depend on the density of the image. Most manufacturers quote figures based on 5% coverage—this figure is typical of text, but graphics can be ten times that.

Apart from copy cost, the major disadvantage of laser printers at the consumer end of the market is the "Henry Ford factor"—any colour you like, provided it is black. Up-market it's different—I'm waiting for prices to drop, before satisfying my lust for a full-colour laser printer.

Inkjet

The very popular inkjets account for two-thirds of the SOHO/consumer printer sales and about two-thirds of these are colour models. Recent competitive price reductions make inkjets particularly attractive as a first (or even second) printer. Their

large market share is due to a combination of quality output, low price and the availability of colour. There is not much that a laser can do that you can't do on an inkjet. The major differences are speed—inkjets are generally slower—and dot-size—lasers can produce smaller dots, giving better halftones and graphics. The paper requirements are different—inkjet printing is a cold process using liquid ink that must dry. Ink also soaks into paper, making print quality very dependant on paper quality. Low-quality papers stretch where the ink deposits and may not lie completely flat. Because the ink is soluble, images may run if they get damp. Ink cartridges can cost you more per page than toner, but this is balanced by a lower capital cost.

Inkjet printers have two major advantages over laser printers—cost and colour. For a few hundred dollars you can buy a printer that will do an excellent job on

word processing or DTP work and can make impressive colour transparencies or good-looking project reports.

A word of warning—to get the most realistic colour pictures you need top-quality paper, which could cost \$2 per A4 sheet.

For the very budget-conscious, inkjets are also available in black-only, but my personal preference for a black-only printer would be to spend a little more and buy a laser printer.

All-in-one devices contain a black-only inkjet printer, with fax and scanner functions. From the printing viewpoint, their limitations and benefits are the same as for a monochrome inkjet. Whether the extra cost of the other functions warrants buying one depends on whether you already have a fax and if you need low-resolution scanning capabilities.

□

Advertisements from members, for Swap, Wanted, For Sale, Free, etc, are run free of charge.

All ads must be loaded as a file (NB: not a message) to the BBS (NB: not the Internet) in ASCII format to area PCUP or supplied as an ASCII file on a virus-free non-returnable MS-DOS diskette (any size) and delivered to the Group's Office.

We do not have the time to type your ads, so this service is restricted to electronic advertisements.

Infected disks are thrown out, without attempting to disinfect or recover data!

Members' ads will be included in the first available issue of PC Update.

Advertisements must include at least one phone number—if you only want replies via the BBS or Internet, only advertise there.

Members' free ads

FREE

Free to a good home
Printer ribbons: 4 x Genicom 4000, 3 x Xerox—various Diablo models, 4 x Dataproducts b300
4 x Terminet 30, 1 x Printronix p300/600
Geoff (03) 5968 4824

WANTED

Sidekick for Windows 3.x
Graeme Brennan (03) 5777 5567

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Corel PrintHouse CD Fantastic DDP for Win95. \$70; for Mac. \$55
MS FlightSimulator CD for Win95 plus Perth CD. \$80 for bundle
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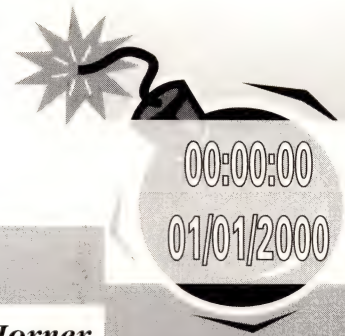
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Where you will be in 2000, and when?

914 DAYS, AND COUNTING..

Jack Horner



The Year 2000 (Y2K) problem is potentially much messier than just the occurrences of the literal value "19" in date types. Anything in software that merely **acts as if** the first two digits of the date are "19" will have insidious effects.

About a year ago, I worked on an analysis of the Global Positioning System (GPS) ground station code to try to characterise the Y2K problem. We found no less than ten types of manifestations of the problem in a survey of a randomly selected sample of 10% of the code. The occurrence of the literal value "19" was only one of these ten types. Other types included type overflow problems at various dates throughout 1999, Y2K arithmetic that implicitly assumed no dates later than 31 Dec 99 were possible, and implicit module-interface date-type conversions.

These problems are potentially infinite in their variety, and not all can be detected with tools. Furthermore, in GPS it is not possible to construct good test cases to see what will happen at the millennium start, because the future (time) states of the system depend on physical values (orbital elements, pole wander, Jovian gravitational force) that can be determined with sufficient accuracy only from the actual operation of the system within about three months of the time of interest.

Approximately 1% of the total GPS code is affected by this class of problems, or affected it.

The GPS user-equipment code is in even deeper trouble because of the Y2K problem,

and the breakage will occur well before 1 Jan 2000. Date, in the GPS signal standard, uses exactly thirteen bits (these bits represent a time-unit offset from a conventional epoch date). This allocation is burned into proms on all existing GPS user equipment. On about August 20, 1999, the actual date value will overflow this 13-bit type, and the equipment will fail to produce correct time or position information. Best estimate is that there are about one million pieces of user equipment that will be immediately affected. Everybody who depends indirectly on those pieces of equipment (meaning all the rest of us) will also be affected. The GPS standards committee is desperately trying to figure out what to do with the problem.

Various well-calibrated software estimation models (SLAM, REVIC, PRICE-S) predict that fixing the Y2K problem in systems of about 500,000 lines of code or larger will take more time than is available between now and the year 2000, regardless of how many programmers are thrown at the job. Most of the US's military command-and-control systems contain more than 500,000 lines of code.

GPS is now the primary means of distributing time standards throughout the US, and throughout much of the world. (The accuracy of the atomic clocks on board the GPS satellites is second only to those maintained by the primary standards clocks in Washington.) Thousands of large financial computers ultimately take their time calibration from GPS, every day. Interest on overnight multi-billion-dollar

short-term electronic-funds transactions is computed at millisecond granularity, derived from the GPS standard.

Place your bets.

jkb@almond.lanl.gov

Editor's note:

I first read this on the Red Rock Eater News Service (RRE). RRE is an eclectic "filter" mailing list, that focuses on the broad area of technology and society. It got my attention for two reasons.

- While at the APCUG planning meeting in Atlanta, former President of APCUG, Larry Shaw, had rented a car fitted with GPS. So even though Larry was away from home, he was able to get around like a native. From all accounts it was an impressive gizmo.
- The author articulates why the year 2000 (Y2K) problem is more than a concern about the literal use of four-vs two-digit year fields in calculations.

The author, Jack K. Horner, wrote the article in response to a message from the US House Science Committee, to Rick Light in response to a forwarding of a comment on ...[a] message from the US House Science Committee, particularly relating to those Y2K problems resulting from the omission of the "19" in the calendar year.

The article appears with the permission of Jack K. Horner.

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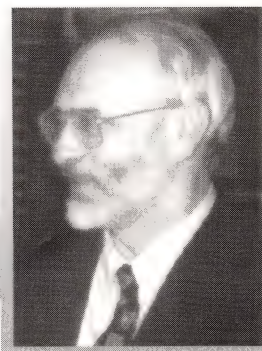
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SOFTWARE REVIEW

George Skarbek



As new programs get larger and hard drive prices fall, more and more users are installing a second hard disk in their computers. Members of Melb PC often install the second drive by themselves as this is within the capabilities of many users. Numerous articles have been written on that subject and some magazines, such as *Australian PC User* that include a sample CD, have even included video and sound instructions installing a second drive.

Having installed that second drive, most users would like to make it their C: drive and the old disk the D: drive. The problem is how to copy all the files, including the hidden and system files to the new drive.

With DOS and Windows 3.1 the problem is that xCOPY will not copy hidden or system files and users must rely on other software tools, if they have them. These tools are used to find and remove the protection, copy the files and reapply the protect to the files. If the computer is a server, or even a workstation on a LAN, there may be quite a few such files.

Windows 95's xCOPY32 has many extra commands, including those which enable you to copy system and hidden files. But there is a catch. When Windows 95 is active, there are open files that will not

get copied. And, in DOS mode, xCOPY32 is not available, so again the user must know which files were missed, and manually copy them all into the appropriate folders.

PowerQuest to the rescue

This is why PowerQuest developed DriveCopy. PowerQuest, you may already know, is the maker of the excellent program, Partition Magic (reviewed in *PC Update*, April 1997).

DriveCopy is designed specifically for copying entire hard disks. This product safely copies the contents of an entire old drive to a new drive, and makes it a bootable disk, and you do **not** need to backup beforehand. DriveCopy handles DOS, Windows 3.1 and 95 as well as OS/2 and NT disks. If your existing drive has partitions, DriveCopy maintains the partitions' size ratio on the new drive. This means if you have three partitions on a 500 MB drive and the new drive is 2 GB, all partitions will be four times bigger on the new drive than they were on the old. You cannot alter the ratio (possibly because PowerQuest also want to sell Partition Magic for users that want to resize their drive partitions without losing data).

Failsafe copy mode

DriveCopy's failsafe copy mode copies data from the original to the new disk. If power fails during this process the original data is not affected and you just have to restart the copying. To start the copying process you boot from a floppy disk, to ensure that no files remain open. You then run DriveCopy from the floppy disk.

DriveCopy's only shortcomings are that it requires the target hard drive to be the master drive and the source (your original) hard drive to be a slave drive. And everything on the target drive is destroyed. This means that DriveCopy must be used immediately after installing the new drive and changing the BIOS settings, but before any data is copied onto it. The manual that comes with DriveCopy is good, with diagrams on how to connect drives. It also includes master/slave settings for common drives as well as Internet addresses for all disk manufacturers. The tech support phone numbers are in the USA.

DriveCopy sells for about \$50. A dealer charges about \$75 to install a second drive, that you purchased from them, and copy your data to it.

With DriveCopy you can do it all yourself, without carrying the computer to a dealer and waiting to get it back. □



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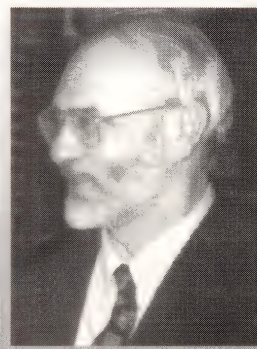
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Tips and tricks



MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER

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Wind 95 natural keyboard shortcuts

Many users who use Windows 95 and have the Windows 95 keyboard (the one that has two keys marked with the Windows logo—WIN key) do not make much use of the extra keys.

These keys can be used for shortcuts such as:

- Pressing the Windows key and E launches Explorer
- WIN+F launches the Find File program
- WIN+M minimises all open programs
- Shift+WIN+M undoes "minimise all".

So now you do not need to have extra shortcuts on the desktop for the Explorer or Find Files cluttering the desktop.

Screen dumps from Windows

In DOS, when you press the PrintScreen key the current screen is printed. In Windows the PrintScreen key copies an image into a buffer but does not print it. To print that information you must open up a suitable program, such as *Word*, *Paint*, *Write* etc, and paste the image into that program by using Ctrl+V or selecting *Edit*, *Paste*.

Producing a screen dump of the active window

Often it is nice to do a screen dump of a small open window, but not of the entire desktop behind it. Just press Alt+PrintScreen to copy the active window into the buffer. This can save a lot of time in cutting and pasting to extract the information from the full screen dump.

Cutting and pasting from a Win 95 DOS box

It is quite easy to copy text from a DOS program and use that text in a Windows 95 program. Run the DOS program in a window, not full screen. Press Alt+Enter if it appears in full screen and you can adjust the size of the window and text.

Click on the *Mark* icon (that's the



Ascension College made the decision in early 1997 to upgrade the motherboards of 40 workstations on its LAN and to purchase 15 new multimedia workstations. We eventually settled on a deal with Peter Yang from Ultimate Computing in Cheltenham. UCT provide us the most competitive quote for this equipment. We have been very pleased with UCT's pre-sales and after-sales support. The staff at UCT are easy to talk to and have always provided information promptly during the course of quoting and negotiations. As manager of IT systems at Ascension College I have been more than happy with the professionalism of their equipment testing, and their knowledge of the components that we are purchasing. From our first order to current smaller orders, UCT has responded quickly with both service and products. We have had negligible problems with the products that we purchased from UCT, UCT has replaced the components quickly and without fuss.

Jamie Burns IT Manager, Ascension College, Bendigo

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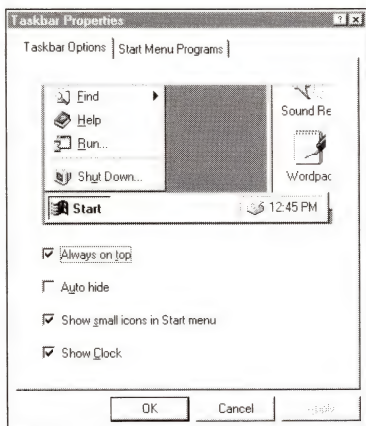
dotted line box) and highlight the text that you want, then click on the *Copy* icon (or Ctrl+V) then open the Windows application (or Alt+Tab to it) and use *Edit, Paste* (or Ctrl+V) to import the DOS text.

Adjusting Win 95 time

Right click on the time in the bottom right hand corner of the task bar and select *Adjust*.

Adjusting Win 95 time format

If you don't like the 24-hour display on the task bar, you can change the display mode. From *Control Panel, Regional settings, Time*, select *Time style*. You will probably see either HH:mm:ss or H:mm:ss. Alter it to read h:mm:ss and then click on *apply*. To get more help on this, click on the question mark next to the X in the top corner and then click on the time panel to get more options.



Adjusting Win 95 daylight saving

If you want Win 95 to correctly adjust for daylight saving next summer then use a program called TZedit. It has been released by another team from Microsoft who thought the Powertoy group was getting too much publicity. It is free and is obtainable from <http://microsoft.com/windows/common/a2730.htm> and also from the new OEM version of Win 95. Although it is theoretically possible to hack into the registry, this data is stored in hexadecimal form and is extremely difficult to decode. Using TZedit it becomes a breeze.

(Daylight saving starts on the last Sunday in October and ends on the last Sunday in March.

Saving pictures in Netscape Gold

Many users save an interesting Web page so that they can refer to it later, and save the pictures by right-clicking. When they open that file, sometimes the pictures are missing. Whether or not they appear is determined by how the original document was created. If they do not appear, it means that in the original document the images were stored in another

folder and Netscape is looking for that folder. To fix this, after saving normally, open the document in the Editor, not Browser, and right click on the symbol where the image is supposed to be and select Image Properties. Eliminate the folder information from the image file name and save. Do this for each image. Now when you open, or switch to the browser, all images will be visible. Note that this only works with the Gold version of Netscape.

More on saving pictures in Netscape

There is a better way of saving the images. From Netscape Gold Version 3 when you wish to save, select *File, Edit document* and then save it. In this way all pictures are saved in one hit rather than having to do it individually.

Shrinking self-extracting executable

When files are sent as attachments via the Internet they are Zipped, to save transmission time for both sides. To make it easier for a new user to work with these files, they are usually converted from a ZIP file to an EXE file by using the ZIP2EXE program that comes with PKZIP. However, even experienced users who know most PKZIP switches do not know that ZIP2EXE has two. The one to use is the -J (junior) switch as this will result in about a 15 KB reduction. □

Winter Warmers

New 'Australian' software manuals show PC Users:
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Seeing the Basics: Visual Basic bookshelf

TWO APPROACHES TO LEARNING VB 5.0

Tony Stevenson



This column provides techniques, tips, and tricks to help you gain familiarity and experience with MS Visual Basic, a popular language that enables you to quickly write both Windows and World Wide Web applications.

With the arrival of Visual Basic 5.0, VB programmers are also presented with a large and diverse choice of books to help them become familiar with the latest release of this popular Windows development language.

These two books are worth adding to your Visual Basic bookshelf.

They are suitable for both novice and experienced VB developers, providing different approaches to coming to terms with the functionality and features now incorporated into VB 5.0.

Day by day

Teach Yourself Visual Basic 5 in 21 Days is an ideal introduction to Windows program development, and Visual Basic programming in particular.

Novice programmers can proceed at their own pace, continually building up their knowledge base as well as tackling the more involved concepts of VB as they progress through the daily lessons.

Alternatively, experienced VB developers can progress through the book much more quickly, using it as an effective way of introducing themselves to this latest release.

The contents of the book are divided into three weeks, each with seven days of tuition, so unfortunately there's no rest on the weekends!

By the end of day one you'll have an understanding of the new VB 5.0 development environment, and will have coded your first VB 5.0 application.

The remaining lessons for this week discuss

- Properties
- Controls (there is a separate chapter dedicated to the topic of graphics controls)
- The basic programming building blocks of VB (procedures, functions, *If* statements, *Do* loops, and variables)

- The use of the mouse in Windows programming
- Menus

- Dialog boxes.

The daily lessons in week 2 concentrate on subjects such as

- Graphics methods
- The steps used to display information in tables
- Displaying and printing data
- How to interface with the Windows environment
- The intricacies of using the keyboard
- File system controls; and the procedures involved in accessing files (random, sequential, and binary access).

By the end of week 2, you will have built up a good working knowledge of Visual Basic.

Week 3 focuses on

- Arrays
 - OLE (Object Linking and Embedding), which is used to exchange information with other Windows programs that are also OLE compliant)
 - The Data Control
 - MDI (Multiple Document Interface) applications
 - ActiveX technology with an emphasis on sound programming and DirectSound (this technology has features that can enhance the use of sound within VB applications)
 - Advice about how to successfully use the Windows API
 - A chapter that demonstrates how to construct your own ActiveX controls.
- The book concludes with an appendix showing how to add custom properties to forms, thereby providing you with extra versatility for designing and coding your applications.

One unusual aspect of this book is the lack of what has become almost a standard with programming books, that is, a companion CD-ROM. So to see the book's programs run you will have to type in the code. However, because the VB 5.0 development environment is significantly different from that of previous releases, this is a good way of quickly becoming familiar with it.

This book is full of useful ideas and

tips that can be used in your everyday VB programming tasks.

Teach Yourself Visual Basic 5 in 21 Days (Fourth Edition)

Nathan Gurewicz and Ori Gurewicz

Published: 1997, SAMS Publishing

798 pages

ISBN: 0 672 30978 5

RRP: \$79.95

An interactive VB course

Visual Basic 5 Interactive Course presents an innovative approach to learning VB. When you purchase the book, you also gain access, via the Internet, to what the publisher refers to as the *eZone*.

By entering the *eZone*, you can ask a real-life online mentor any questions about the material covered in the book. And with the resources and facilities available in the *eZone* you can also do the book's quizzes online (and get immediate feedback on how well you did), converse with other VB programmers and developers studying the book via a mailing list, access the latest VB World Wide Web sites, and receive a newsletter each month that describes the most recent developments occurring in the *eZone*.

If you prefer to read from the screen, the contents of the book have also been replicated online.

By using the *eZone*, and working your way through the material, it is possible to earn a certificate of completion (providing, of course, that you have attained the standard of knowledge expected).

Each chapter of this book has been divided into between 5 and 8 lessons.

Each of the lessons contains a self-contained unit of knowledge.

Because of their length (which is not too long) they can be tackled whenever you have some spare time. Each one concludes with a short quiz reinforcing the main points that have been discussed in that lesson (and most importantly the correct answers are provided in one of the book's two appendices).

This book is satisfying to read because you are left with a feeling of achievement after finishing each lesson.

Visual Basic 5 Interactive Course is a nearly 1100-page book that contains the subject matter a typical commercial VB

programmer needs to know about, and understand, to do his or her job.

As well as discussing the new development environment, and the basic structure and content of Windows programs developed using VB 5.0, the book also tackles more advanced topics. These include

- Classes
- The Setup Wizard
- Application optimisation
- Dynamic Data Exchange (DDE)
- Executable creation
- Object Linking and Embedding (including the OLE Container Control, OLE Automation, Object Hierarchy, the Object Browser, and OLE Servers)
- The steps involved in building your own ActiveX controls
- The role and use of the Windows Registry
- VB 5.0 communications programming.

The companion CD-ROM contains all of the source code discussed throughout the book, a copy of Microsoft Internet Explorer (version 3.01), and a comprehensive set of VB utilities and third-party controls (these demonstration versions represent an excellent way of testing the products before actually making a commitment to buy them).

The book concludes with an appendix containing a guide to Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Visual Basic 5 Interactive Course

John Harrington *et al.*

Published: 1997, Waite Group Press, a division of SAMS Publishing

1064 pages plus CD-ROM

ISBN: 1 57169 077 8

RRP: \$79.95

E-mail address

Contact Tony Stevenson by email at acsmls@acslink.net.au

About the author

Tony Stevenson has recently completed a Masters in Computing by Research at Monash University in which his thesis concentrated on a component-driven approach to software development using Visual Basic. □

The Australian Visual Basic Users Group is organizing a weekend technical conference (16/17 August)

Preliminary topics include VB3/VB4/VB5 conversion issues; Interfacing databases, IE, Word, Excel; Application distribution, Setup Distributed Computing (Client/Server) Internet programming; Jet Engine under VB5; ActiveX, and more.

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Are you looking SCSI lately?

Part 4: SCSI Cable Systems

HINTS AND KINKS

Fred Townsend



SCSI's good news is its bus can handle a mixed lot of up to seven (or fourteen) devices. The bad news is, it is difficult to find cables with eight connectors. (The host adapter uses a connector also.) Furthermore, the seemingly simple SCSI cable turns out to be a complex critical system component. This article explains why cables may be the most important part of a SCSI system and how cables can be designed and fabricated easily.

Loose specs

The SCSI-1 and SCSI-2 specifications contain few recommendations regarding cables. The only requirement, a maximum length of 6 metres (almost 20 feet), does not address problems created by newer chips.

Without specifications the system manufacturers were free to design their cables however they wished. Typically, the design job was assigned to a mechanical or manufacturing engineer. There was little regard for the cable as an electrical circuit or component.

At first, the haphazard design approach usually was successful. This was because most systems were not sold with seven SCSI devices. Rather, the additional capability was sold as an expansion feature. Also, the first SCSI devices, particularly host adapters, were electrically slow.

Speed kills

Electrical signals travel at about two-thirds the speed of light. That should be fast enough for even the most ardent speed freaks, but at that speed problems occur when electrical signals travel some distance. At some distance the simple passive connecting wires turn into complex electrical circuits called "Transmission Lines". Transmission lines impose additional circuit design considerations.

The distance required to invoke the transformation is determined by the electrical characteristics of the SCSI devices: host adapters, hard drives, tape drives, CD-ROM drives, scanners, and printers. The original, relatively slow, SCSI-1 devices yielded critical transformation points at distances of two to three feet. At this distance only large systems would be affected.

Faster chips arrive

The Adaptec company was founded to produce SCSI chips. The smaller the chip the cheaper the integrated circuit is to produce. All chip manufacturers use a technique known as "Die Shrink" to increase performance while reducing manufacturing costs. Sometime in 1991 Adaptec completed the third generation die shrink of their popular 6660 SCSI bus controller chip. The die shrink made the chip significantly faster. The IC is used by many host adapter manufacturers, including Adaptec itself. The change effectively shrank the critical transmission line distance to eight inches. Now every design using this chip needed to consider transmission line effects.

Within a few months the networks were alive with messages about "bad cables". What are bad cables? Why did they suddenly materialize? The apparent answer: Bad cables were the effect of faster chips and improper system designs rather than truly bad cables.

Hair pulling time

It didn't take Adaptec long to react to the bad press. Adaptec advised manufacturers that adding a capacitor to their host adapters could mitigate the effects of the faster chip. They also warned of the existence in the supply pipeline of many bad cables. Bad cables that were not SCSI-2 compliant.

Manufacturers found the capacitor did little to mitigate their problems. At the same time they scurried to determine what a bad cable looked like. Their investigation labeled non-compliant SCSI-2 cables a myth, because SCSI-2 does not address cables except for length.

Bad cables are not bad in terms of production quality. They are poorly designed cables or poorly applied cables. Poorly designed cables can produce some very strange characteristics. For instance plugging in one SCSI device can make another SCSI device appear to be defective or worse, plugging in the seventh SCSI device can make the host adapter appear defective. Poor cables have been known to cause baldness too.

Focus on transmission lines

Transmission lines are a well defined science. That doesn't mean they are simple. The transmission line characteristics stem from Maxwell's equations, a complex set of equations that are taught in senior level electrical engineering courses. Maxwell's equations have caused more than one electrical engineering student to change majors.

The problem was also taken to the SCSI-3 specifications committee. The SCSI-3 committee experts successfully dissected the problem and translated the information into simple SCSI-3 specifications which may be used to identify bad SCSI-1 and SCSI-2 cables. The two most important parameters are a minimum connector to connector spacing of 0.3 metre (one foot) and the requirement for active termination.

Simple specifications

The connector to connector spacing simply says the spacing between any two connectors on a SCSI cable should be at least 30 cm (one foot). For instance, a cable to connect three SCSI devices to a host adapter should be at least 90 cm, (three feet) long. Typically, the host adapter is not located beside the drives so the distance from the host adapter to the first device can be greater than 30 cm (one foot). In this case, it's better to allocate 60 cm (two feet) for spacing between the end connector and the first device. Using the stretch factor results in a very simple rule:

The length of any SCSI cable should be equal to the total number of connectors times 30 cm (one foot).

Applying the simple rule to the above example results in a cable length of 120 cm (four feet).

How simple indeed. Now anyone can design their own SCSI cables.

Build your own?

Can SCSI cables be fabricated? It's not hard for most hobbyists to do. For many, it may be the only means of obtaining some custom cables, that can't be purchased at any price. Also, it saves big bucks.

Cables are normally fabricated using Insulation Displacement Connectors. IDC

connectors use a type of cable wire with special insulation designed to be pierced by the connector. Attachment is made in seconds using a special IDC or arbor press.

No press?

A small vice with 75 mm to 150 mm (3 to 6 inch) jaws will serve as a press. A Sharpie (Texta) felt tip pen, a sharp pair of scissors, a few scraps of carpet padding, and a little tape is all that is needed to complete the hobbyist tool set.

Active terminator required

Important! The ends of a cable must be terminated. Terminators, as the name infers, electrically terminate the end of a cable. The terminator absorbs excess electrical energy and prevents energy from reflecting back down the cable path. Reflected signals are undesirable because they interfere with normal signals causing signal errors.

Each end of the cable needs a terminator but there should never be more terminators than cable ends in any SCSI system. (Host adapters contain terminators even though they are not always visible.)

What kind of terminator should be used? While it is possible to terminate the cable using the terminator contained within the last device on the cable, there are significant disadvantages. The terminators in drives are usually passive terminators. It is far better to add a connector to the cable and dedicate that connector to a plug in active terminator. This adds another 30 centimetres (one foot) to the cable length but enhanced terminating quality and utility are well worth the effort.

All plug-in terminators look alike. When purchasing, be sure to ask for an active terminator.

When using a plug in terminator the terminators within each device must be disabled. This is done by either switching off the terminator or by removing SIP or DIP resistor networks. Consult the device manufacturer's documentation for details.

Most terminators require electrical power. The power is supplied by the SCSI device and/or via the cable from the host adapter. Most host adapters have a fused source to supply this power. Up to three sources may simultaneously power the terminator. The presence of terminator power may be verified by measuring approximately 4.75 volts between pins 26 and 1 (ground) on any SCSI cable connector.

Document the design

Before shopping for parts design the cable on paper. Don't forget to add connectors for the host adapter and the terminator. If connector identification is a problem, carry any existing cables to the store or make a sketch or tracings of the mating connector.

Head start

Many surplus stores have used cables. Used cables are an excellent source of parts and serve as assembly samples. Sometimes used cables can be modified rather than starting from scratch. Look for the gray connectors (3M part) with metal retainer clips. Inserting a bent paper clip end beside the metal clips enables you to remove the retainer easily. The black connectors (AMP) without metal clips usually are not salvageable.

Whenever assembling or disassembling connectors, it is good idea to mate the connector with its opposite type connector. This prevents pins from bending or falling out and reduces breakage. Don't forget to buy extra connectors for this purpose. Surplus cable parts are ideal for this purpose.

The ribbon cable itself is often the most expensive component. Sometimes buying a long length surplus cable can provide the material. Don't overlook the 60 conductor cables. SCSI cables normally use 50 conductor cables but the less popular 60 conductor cables are cheaper. Splitting off the extra 10 conductors is easy to do.

Surplus stores are a good source of terminators too. The most common terminators use a slightly different connector similar to a so called Centronics printer connector. If you select this kind be sure its an "Active Terminator". Less effective and only slightly cheaper are the "Passive Terminators". A better solution is the IDC AMP terminator. This terminator will enable daisy chaining the cable if it is ever necessary to extend it. Don't forget to buy the mating connector for the terminator.

Build it!

Start cable fabrication by routing the cable along side the already mounted SCSI devices. Orient the cable with the red edge stripe on the right side when viewing the devices from the rear. For each SCSI device, check the device connector carefully. Mark the location of connector to be attached on the ribbon cable. If device pin 1 is located on the right side and/or the centre notch is located on top, mark the location "Back". If device pin 1 is located on the left side and/or the centre notch is located on the bottom, mark the location "Front". Don't forget to observe the 30 cm (one foot) minimum spacing between connectors.

Caution: There are four possible orientations for attaching the connectors ... and only one is correct. The ribbon connector has a red stripe along one edge. The red stripe must align with pin 1 (normally denoted with a small arrow or ridge on the connector body) on both connectors.

Temporarily mate the first connector with a corresponding scrap connector.

(This will protect the pins during the pressing process described below.) Separate the retainer back from the mated pair. If the location is marked *Back* place the retainer back over the marking. Place the connector body on the opposite side of ribbon. Slowly mate the retainer back to the connector body. If the location is marked *Front* place the connector body over the marking. Place the retainer back on the opposite side of ribbon. Slowly mate the retainer back to the connector body. Verify that cable connector pin 1 is on the same side as the ribbon stripe before completing the mating process.

Hold or tape the connector in place while positioning the connector in a vice lined with carpet padding. Slowly compress the vice until the retainer back is completely mated with the body. When completely mated, the ends of the retainer back should snap into place.

Repeat the process by pressing the remaining connectors. Excess cable can be trimmed with scissors, although this is probably not necessary unless the six metre cable length is exceeded. The terminator must be at the very end of the cable regardless of the length of the cable. (If using both internal and external cables, turn off or disable the terminator on the host adapter.)

Inspect all the connectors for damaged or mismatched parts. If everything is okay, install the cable and test the system.

Next month

Part 5 of Are you looking SCSI lately?, AIDE Systems.

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About the author

Fred Townsend is a consulting electronic engineer and owner of DC to Light Consulting Services. His business specialises in noise managed, system, circuit and chip designs in both analog and digital domains. Fred has a rich background in broadcasting; telephone, disk drive, microwave and computer manufacturing; military; and aerospace.

Fred has been a sysop since 1982 when he started his first BBS using a CP/M \$100 system with 0.8 MB of storage on two floppy drives. Today his system is a LAN-linked, 4-line, system with over 8 GB of storage. Fred has served as an officer for several user groups and is currently president of the Silicon Valley Computer Society.

Fred is a former member of the faculties of Allen Hancock and Mission Colleges and holds a Bachelor Science degree in Electronic Engineering and an Associate Science degree in Electronic Research and Development Technology. □

What does membership of Melb PC offer you?

BENEFITS OF BELONGING



Strength

Melbourne PC User Group Inc. has over 11,500 members and is the largest PC User Group in the world. It was founded in 1983, and is still run for its members, people like you.

The Group employs full-time office staff and some part-time help. Some services are provided by contractors, but the other functions of the club—magazine writing and editing, online services maintenance; collection and distribution of shareware; organisation of SIG and monthly meetings and more, is performed by volunteers.

The Group today proudly has a membership of people from all walks of life and with a broad range of computer skills. With this vast store of knowledge, members have access to information and help in numerous fields—programming, software solutions, DOS and Windows, communications, to name just a few.

Magazine

Melb PC's magazine, *PC Update*, is sent to members 11 times a year. *PC Update* publishes articles written by members and all members are welcome, indeed encouraged, to write articles on a subject they know about, to share with others. *PC Update* occasionally reprints articles from overseas user groups, to keep Melb PC members as up-to-date as possible.

PC Update has won awards in each of the last six years in the International User Groups' Newsletter Contest. Some of the many awards it has won are "Best Feature Articles," "Best Publication," "Best Features and Reviews," and "Best Columnist." It has also been runner-up in "Best Publication" and "Best Layout and Design." Many people join the Group just for the value *PC Update* provides, well worth the annual membership fee on its own, and then discover all the other benefits of membership.

A year's membership of Melb PC, which includes having *PC Update* delivered to you, costs about as much as it does to buy a year's issues over the counter.

Computer First-Aid and Dial Help

This unique service is made available free to members simply because volunteers within the Group give their time and knowledge to assist with any computing problems you may have. About 300 telephone numbers of unpaid volunteers, with day- and night-time contacts, are mailed to members with their *PC Update*. The service covers over 120 separate topics.

Training

The Group provides training in a diverse range of computer skills, from starting with computers to advanced programming.

Melb PC has its own fully-equipped training centre, using networked Pentium systems. Courses are run as a service to members, making them very cost-competitive when compared to similar courses elsewhere.

Students learn in a classroom environment with one computer per student. Courses include applications (such as Quicken, Excel and Word), BBS and Internet usage, and operating systems such as DOS and Windows.

Most classes are run in the evenings or at weekends, when parking is readily available. The Club's rooms are also easily accessible by public transport.

All courses provide suitable training material and support and a list of courses on offer to members appears in each issue of *PC Update*.

Monthly Meeting

Each month, except January, Melb PC holds a meeting, open to members and visitors. The meeting is usually addressed by representatives from the computer industry on topics of general interest. They frequently give away samples of software and other products. These speakers include many from Australian vendors and distributors—we have also been privileged to be addressed by CEOs such as Bill Gates, Philippe Kahn, Gordon Eubanks and others who made special visits to address our members.

There is also the ability to address questions to the membership at large, seeking advice or problem-solving. Shareware and diskettes are sold and members socialise and discuss anything that takes their fancy—even computers!

Following the meeting many members gather for a meal, arranged at a convenient restaurant, at "user-friendly" prices.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Group has SIGs covering many aspects of computer use. A SIG can deal with any topic relating to personal computing, ranging from particular applications to hardware and programming, or how to get the best from your equipment.

There are also regional SIGs, for members in outlying geographical areas.

A list of meeting dates, places and contacts for SIGs is published each month in *PC Update*, with reports of past and future activities. All SIG meetings are available to any member.

Bulletin Board

Melb PC operates a free 23-hours-a-day bulletin board system (BBS) as another member service. The BBS, running on 34 lines, is the biggest OS/2-based BBS in the world.

The BBS has two main functions—electronic mail and message exchange, and file transfer facilities. The mail and messaging facilities enable members to exchange messages with each other and to seek help on a wide range of topics, not only from other members but also from the world-wide PC community. This service gives BBS users access to an enormous pool of experience and talent on a vast array of subjects. If you have a problem, put a message on the BBS and, more often than not, it's answered in a day or so!

The BBS carries many files on a range of topics. These have been uploaded by members who found them useful and can be downloaded by other members. They include many useful utilities and the latest versions of shareware software, often obtained from overseas BBSs before appearing in other Australian outlets.

Internet Service

The club provides access to a 127-line full-featured Internet service, providing access to Usenet, ftp, irc, www, gopher and telnet.

SLIP/PPP accounts are provided. This popular service is being expanded and enhanced to serve a larger number of members.

Software Library

Melb PC maintains an extensive and up-to-date software library of programs (over 1300 disks, with about 50 new disks added each month) for IBM-type personal computers, obtained from around the world. This library of shareware software is available only to Melb PC members and is supplied on new disks at very low prices.

An order form for this software is in every issue of *PC Update*.

Shareware Registration

Much of the most popular software on Melb PC's Bulletin Board and in its software library is shareware, i.e. try free and pay only if you like and use it.

The club organises bulk shareware registrations, usually at a substantial discount.

Club-organised registrations also save members the costs of US-dollar bank drafts and overseas postage. □

MELB PC Membership Application

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I do ☐ / do not ☐ want to receive occasional promotional mail from commercial organisations.

I hereby apply for membership of Melbourne PC User Group Inc. and agree to abide by its rules while I am a member. Signature Date

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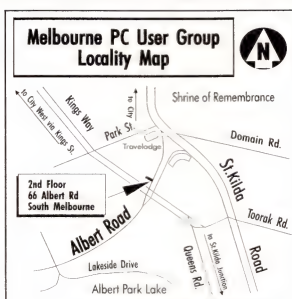
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Training order form

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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total:		<input type="text"/>

Members' discounts

If you are a member or advertiser offering a discount on goods or services to Melb PC members, on production of their membership cards, please contact the office to register your offer, which will then be listed in future issues of *PC Update*.



For membership application or renewal, or training orders, please use the remittance and/or credit card form on the next page

Top choice shareware

These are some of the most popular volumes in the Melb PC Shareware/Freeware library. Refer to the regular catalogue updates in *PC Update* for up-to-date listings of other disks—use the lower part of this order form for your choice from those listings.

Shareware/PD Title	Melb No.	Format	Qty	Amount
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Growit	8157	3.5		
List	1490	3.5 / 5.25		
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McAfee VirusScan for Windows 3.x (2-disk set)	8626/27	3.5		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 95 (2-disk set)	8664/65	3.5		
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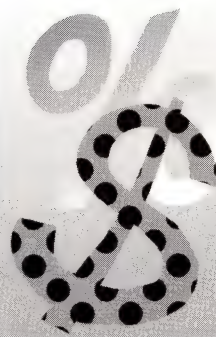
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Melb PC SIG Room

Assembly & Other Languages

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
1st Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Ballarat

Ken Smith

kensmith@giant.bnc.com.au
1st Thursday, 7.30 pm
(03) 5332 7851 BH & AH
(except school holidays)
Ballarat & Clarendon
College, Junior School
Campus
614 Mair St Ballarat

Bendigo

Russell Collins

(03) 5439 3708
2nd Wednesday, 7.30 pm
Girton Grammar School
(Computer Room)
105 Mackenzie Street
Bendigo
(Vine Street entrance)

C/C++ Programming

Ken Holmes

(03) 9583 1504 BH & AH
4th Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Clarion

Alan King

(03) 9882 8044 BH
4th Wednesday, 6.30 pm
Suite 9,
96 Camberwell Road
East Hawthorn
(Through wire gate and
up the stairs on the
south-east side of
Roseberry St)

Communications

Philip Lew

(03) 9822 2998 BH
(Brief calls please)
2nd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Daytime

Felix van Lier

Felixvl@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9525 3962 BH & AH
Deputy convener:
Brian Taylor
2nd Thursday, 10.00 am
Melb PC SIG Room

East

Keith Lane

keithln@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9762 6644 Anytime
(03) 9761 1414 Fax
Asst convener:
Stewart Tanner
(03) 9879 9776
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Gas and Fuel Theatre
200 Rooks Road, Vermont

East Workshop

Aldo Pitre

aldop@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9878 7959
Asst convener:
Ian Paterson
(03) 9755 2238
Ring for dates
Unit 11,
27-33 Rooks Road
Mitcham.
(Offices of Haldatec P/L)

Freeware and Shareware

Doug Westcott

dougw@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9898 2765 AH
Co-convener: Tony James
3rd Tuesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Graphics

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener:
Kevin Gorie
3rd Monday, 7.45 pm
We meet in the bungalow
at the rear of Nadish
Naoraji's home,
8 Park Crescent
North Caulfield

Hardware

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
3rd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Music

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener: Eric Best
(03) 9646 6898 AH
2nd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, Central

Graham Paul

(03) 9417 5315 AH
3rd Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, East

Doug Brooke

(03) 9822 3458 BH & AH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
St Mark's Anglican
Church,
Cnr Canterbury & Burke
Rds, Camberwell

OS/2

John Angelico

talldad@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9544 8792
4th Tuesday, 6.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Programming

Ross Hall

(03) 5428 6470 AH
(03) 9699 4000 BH or
Andrew Callaway
acal@ozemail.com.au
(03) 9619 4067 BH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Quicken

Viv Martin

martinv@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9583 5372 AH
4th Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Retired & Interested Persons

Ken Thomas

(03) 9884 5309 BH & AH
4th (not last) Friday,
10.00 am
Lutheran Church
25 Cypress Avenue
Glen Waverley

UNIX

Yahya Abdal-Aziz
(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
3rd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Video Editing (Linear)

Albert Vanzet
Derek Hampson
(03) 9853 2482
4th Monday, 6.30 pm
45 Talbot Avenue
Balwyn

Video Editing (Non-linear)

Kevin Gorie
(03) 9870 3965
2nd Monday, 6.30 pm
45 Talbot Avenue
Balwyn

Waffle

Vince Thornton

018 171 344 or
Andrew Callaway
acal@ozemail.com.au
(03) 9619 4067 BH
"Eat-ins" after monthly
meeting.

Warragul

Gordon Ross

(03) 5623 5434 AH
1st Friday, 7.30 pm
Warragul Leisure Center
Function Room

Windows

Mikhail Bortolotto

(03) 9888 2360 AH
1st Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Western Suburbs

4th Tuesday, 7.00 pm
Sunshine Squash Centre
(corner Kent and Stewart
Streets, Braybrook)

Word Processing/DTP

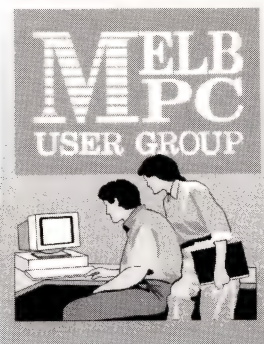
Loraine Briggs

lbriggs@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9563 6396 AH
014 693 882
4th Friday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

The Blind Citizens Support Group
meets at 7.45 pm on the 3rd Tuesday
of each month, at 1st Floor, 87 High
Street, Prahran. For further details,
please contact John Machin, on (03)
9569 1440 (BH).

SIG meeting reports

CLUB ACTIVITIES



Bendigo

Peter Ward

Andrew Moon from CPU Computers gave an interesting presentation in May, with a lot of interesting information on the MMX Pentium chip and the (as yet unreleased) Pentium 2. He also covered the general quality of computer components.

The June meeting was about genealogy, with speakers from G.U.M. giving an enlightening address. G.U.M. is Genealogy Using Microcomputers. The larger than usual turn up of members and visitors enjoyed the presentation.

A visit to Coliban Water's offices is planned for July. Members are asked to meet at the premises at 2 Alder Street Golden Square at 7.30 pm. Coliban Water has been privatised and is now operated by Corvico. The operators of Corvico are excited about getting the chance to show off their computers and software.

August will be dedicated to farm software, Alan Stevens, an agronomist with Westfarmers Dalgety, who has also researched a number of farm management software packages, will be our speaker.

C/C++ Programming

Ken Holmes

If you are interested in C/C++ programming, as a tyro or as a tyrant, you are welcome at this SIG.

At our May meeting, Mark Trickett demonstrated the C Snippets compilation—available on Fidonet and our BBS. Mark also reviewed the messages in the Fidonet International C echo—also on our BBS.

The C Snippets compilation contains 600+ small pieces of C (and a few of C++) code as well as FAQs, tutorials and discussions on programming concepts. This is a valuable resource for anyone tackling the challenge of C programming. The latest available update (Nov 1996) is on our BBS as SNIP9611.ZIP. SNIPVIEW.ZIP is the viewer for navigating the files, which are neatly indexed into groups of similar subject matter.

Daytime

Felix van Lier

April: John Fitzsimons spoke about Internet applications and utilities, including web browsers, e-mailers, newsreaders, telephony, Hindsite—the URL look up database—file duplicates, checking, modems, etc. Thank you John for giving us the

opportunity to participate in such an interesting and informative discussion.

May: It was a pleasure to welcome George Skarbek to our May meeting. George is well known to members for his Question and Answer session at Melb PC's monthly meeting and his regular column in *The Age's* computer section. George answered questions on topics from hard disks, to Trumpet Winsock, Windows 3.x and 95, DOS, MEMMAKER, modems, Internet Explorer, DEFRAG and SCANDISK. We are grateful to George for sharing his extensive computer knowledge and skills with us. We all hope he will join us again before the end of the year.

July: Alan McKenzie, convener of the Retirees SIG's Printing group will talk to us using QEdit v4 for printing and text editing. I am sure Alan will help us resolve our printing problems and we look forward to welcoming him

August: Morris Tobias, Melb PC Vice-President, and CEO of Computer Rebuilds, will tell us about the latest advances in computer hardware. This is important to us all and is sure to be interesting and instructive.

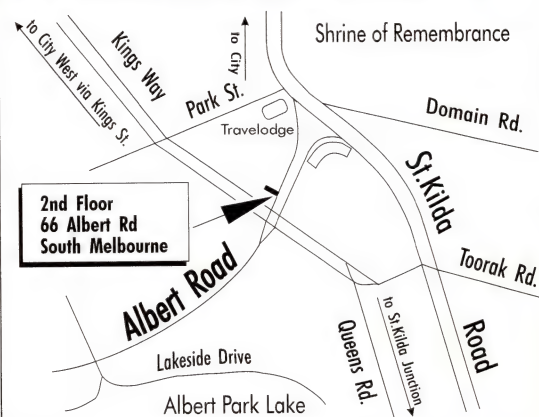
Visitors are always welcome to join us.. You'll find us a helpful group, so come along and see what it is all about.

Meetings Calendar

(Check with SIG Convener when a SIG meeting falls on a Public or School Holiday)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
First	Windows ‡		Main Monthly Meeting Waffle	Assembly & Other Languages ‡ Ballarat	
Second	Access (Database) ‡ Video Editing (non-linear)	Programming ‡ East New Users, East	Bendigo Communications ‡	Music ‡ Daytime ‡	
Third	Graphics New Users, Central ‡	Committee ‡ Freeware and Shareware ‡	Hardware ‡	UNIX ‡	
Fourth	C/C++ Programming ‡ Video Editing (linear)	OS/2 ‡ Western Suburbs	Clarion	Quicken ‡	Word Processing/DTP ‡ Retired and Interested Persons

Melbourne PC User Group Locality Map



‡ Many SIGs meet at Melb PC's premises, on the second floor at 66 Albert Road, South Melbourne.

Margaret Brown

At the May meeting Geoff Shenfield and Julie Vasiliades gave us an overview of digital cameras and related products from Kodak. The comment was made that in the US in 1995, e-mail messages exceeded normal postage and PCs outsold television sets. Therefore Kodak is confident that there is a huge market for products that enable computer users to include photographed or scanned images in their business or general communications.

During the Question and Answer session George Skarbek explained the advantages of using a local server that has a direct link to a facility such as the Tucows mirror site. Caching improves performance and saves bandwidth. Recent hits are stored locally and can be accessed very quickly. Downloading files from an overseas site always increases the chances of encountering clogged lines.

Transport: Co-ordination to assist anyone having difficulty in getting to our meeting is under way. If you need a lift, or are able to offer one to another member, talk to Frank Walsh at the next meeting. We have organised a larger car parking area for future meetings.

Shareware: Have you ever lost track of the paperwork that came with some favorite software or needed an accurate listing of your software expenses? Frank Walsh had an answer during his shareware segment. Software Catalog records as much information as you need, with serial numbers and telephone support contacts. All the obvious fields are listed and specific comments about a program can be entered. You can also search any field, print the database and compare graphs. Frank welcomes assistance from any member willing to share a favorite program with the group. With the benefit of his own, painful experience, he offers some advice to would-be presenters:

Wear the right glasses

- Learn how to avoid microphone feedback
 - Don't tangle the cables
 - Don't lose data during upload
 - Learn how to type one-handed in the dark
 - Conquer mind block
 - Learn how to recover lost self-esteem!
- In response to a Win 95 question asked at the last meeting, Warren Kent gave a tutorial on the use of Briefcase. This facility shares information between two computers via floppy disks. He guided us through the Help files and showed how to avoid the most likely problems.

The focus for the May Tips and Tricks was making menus and applications more manageable.

Often at a well run presentation there is someone behind the scenes ensuring

that the essentials run smoothly. We have Matthew Botherway looking after sound and light and recording each meeting. Your contribution is greatly appreciated Matthew, many thanks from all of us.

OS/2

John Angelico

My apologies to those who diligently read the May *PC Update* entry for the OS/2 SIG meeting. The dreaded gremlins attacked my typing fingers and I typed 24 instead of 27.

May special topic: Lotus Domino and the Lotus Web and Internet tools was our special topic for the night. Lotus Notes in its simplest form can function as a built-in email platform for multiple accounts and multiple work environments—office LAN, home dial-up connection and offline road warrior/digital phone connection. Although that's a bit like using a semi-trailer to do the weekly grocery shopping.

With the Domino release (version 4.5 of Notes) Lotus has presented a polished Web interface at the front of the powerful data management and groupware tool that many companies find indispensable. Anyone, with any browser can access a Notes Database via the Internet, an intranet or an

extranet. (There, I got the three current buzzwords into one sentence!) It won't hurt them and they may not even notice!

And there's more! Now any company already using Notes can publish directly to the Web, enabling anyone with appropriate security clearances to access their data securely.

But that's not all! The Domino strategy is implemented securely according to all the available protocols and therefore can become the base tool for launching Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Electronic Commerce (EC) applications in a multi-platform environment (another buzzword!).

All of the original groupware tools that made Notes famous are still there and have been improved too: calendars, meetings, to-do lists, schedules, etc. Everything to help you organise what you do (but again, it's much more than "just" a PIM or an office planner).

The maturity of Notes, with years of field use behind it means that it is the market leader, and Lotus, recognising its critical nature, is working hard to stay in front of the competition from Microsoft, Corel, Novell and Netscape.

This is the kind of healthy competition we need—everyone trying to deliver class products that actually solve business problems or enable businesses to develop new opportunities.

Pricing details are available from Lotus but anyone who is interested will be pleasantly surprised at the figures—I was!

Open forum: We again welcomed new-

comers and took questions, including one gentleman who brought his machine in to see how much we could do to help him configure it for multiple OS operation: Win 95; DOS/Win 3.x and OS/2. He quickly had a small crowd around him asking questions and offering help.

Hardware day: A number of people brought machines in, and whilst not all problems were resolved, we all went away a little wiser than when we began. We also had an excellent and friendly time chatting. Many thanks to Albert Chong for organising the day.

Shareware: Please remember that the Melb PC BBS offers an excellent service and regular OS/2ers upload new and improved versions of native OS/2 shareware. Be sure to check the current offerings.

Next Meetings: Tuesday 24 June and Tuesday 22 July 6:30 pm at Melb PC.

Hardware Day: Another hardware day will be planned during the next meetings. Please advise me, at talldad@pobox.com.au or on the BBS in the OS/2 Local message area, of any particular problems you want to resolve so we can plan ahead.

Future topics (planned but dates still open)

- AVA and similar multi-platform applications. Corel OfficeSuite For Java
- Special for new users: Warp up and running with performance and tuning tips
- Shareware reviews: various (please report back on what you would like to learn about)

- A meeting with IBM business partners
- OS/2 and related literature (McGills Computer Section)

Come along and add your voice to the requests for topics.

Retired and Interested Persons

Ken Thomas

Following our April meeting address on disk and CD-ROM technology our May meeting took the form of a swap meet that turned into an auction ably conducted by our live-wire auctioneer, Leigh Hawke.

Items for sale ranged from old computers, hard drives and various difficult-to-recognize cards, to low-speed CD-ROM drives (actually one-speed), and all kinds of ancient software. Most of these items appeared to sell. But for those who had to take their goods back home, bear up, there will probably be another chance next year.

Melb PC President, Stan Johnstone, has accepted an invitation to attend our June meeting and we look forward to hearing the latest news from him.

A voice activation program demonstration, by Vital Solutions of Rowville, will be given at our July meeting. In August, our member, Ian Bock, will show us what he does with computers, cameras and fractals.

Enquiries to Ken Thomas on 9884 5309.

Video Editing

Albert Vanzet

Just like a child that grows into adulthood and leaves the parental home, so have our Video Editing SIGs grown from inexperienced beginnings into successful meetings. It is now time to leave our parental home and move out on our own. We have moved to our new venue at 45 Talbot Avenue in Balwyn. The premises are modern and the hall seats 50 comfortably. We have the use of a large television, but have to supply our own Super VCR. Presenters will also have to bring their own computer equipment. Parking is no problem and the 109 tram stops nearby in Whitehorse Road.

In view of our success showing and discussing members' videos, we ask other members to bring in their video tapes, good or bad, Oscar winning or failures. It is from those examples that we can learn. We have joined SIGs not to prove our abilities, but to learn from each other.

Questionnaire update: About 60% of SIG attendees have returned the questionnaire. The main interests are to hear, see and talk about each other's experiences. Many of our Linear SIG members do not yet have a video editing program. We trust that our meetings will help them choose the

right program and start turning their precious tapes into pleasant productions. (Even if they may need a bit of help from their fellow members.)

We invite all Melb PC members interested in using their PC to edit videos, to come to our informative and entertaining meetings.

Next meetings: "Linear" 28 July, starting time 6.30 pm. Although it will no longer be necessary to book in advance, it will help the conveners to plan the evening if you do book. Please tell us also if you can bring a video tape. Contact Derek Hampson at (03) 9853 2482

"Non-Linear" 14 July, starting time 6.30 pm. Contact Kevin Gorie at (03) 9497 4080.

Western Suburbs

Our first meeting was held in May at the Sunshine Squash Centre. The people there felt it was much needed. An enjoyable time was had by all attending.

We discussed what to do at future meetings. One suggestion was that the SIG has a go at putting a system together. Building the system would be a learning experience and help us understand what each part of a system does.

Our meetings will be on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Squash Centre (corner Kent and Stewart Streets, Braybrook) starting at 7 pm.

Our next meeting will be on the night of 24 June. Keep it free and join us. □

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For enrolment details and course information, please contact our Short Course Information Officer, Mr Ramy Dy on 9660 4425.

We also offer direct entry part/full time training in electronics from basics to degree. Contact Sofia Bourke on 9660 4427 for further information.

Internet rotary dial in lines

9690 5644—PPP script or manual—first 30 minutes only per day.

9690 5999—PPP or SLIP script or manual—up to 120 minutes total per day.

9686 4506—PAP (automatic password authentication)—up to 120 minutes total per day.

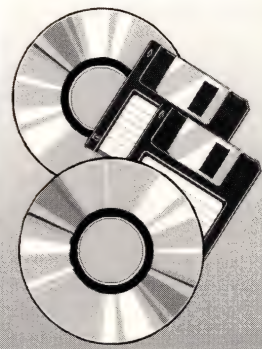
Your time on each line is added for a maximum of 120 minutes per day from all lines. Disconnection will occur on the 30 minute line after 30 minutes total on any line—time on the other lines is included in the calculation of this 30 minutes.

PAP = PPP + password authentication (Windows 95 or NT protocol is the default for Windows 95 and NT). No script file is needed for automatic login with PAP. □

Shareware/Freeware library update

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Glenn Webster



Updates

Melb 2595

Intermediate English Tutor v3.2

Intermediate English Computer Tutor (IECT) is a tutorial that interactively teaches you the subtleties of the English language. The program is useful for those who know the language and yet find certain aspects of it somewhat puzzling. IECT highlights many of the hard and tricky aspects of English and improves your speech and writing skills. This version corrects some minor bugs. It requires DOS 3.1, Windows 3.x or Win 95 and 500 KB of free hard disk space. Regn US\$66. An Advanced version of this tutor is available on disk Melb 8790.

Melb 8002

Hypertext Virus Summary 9705

This program is revised regularly to make available up-to-date information on all known viruses. The hypertext format of the information presented enables quick reference to any virus, variant or related species. The program is now extensively cross-referenced. It can be navigated easily using the menus supplied. This revision covers more than 3723 viruses and variants. Regn for home use is US\$30. Other uses require a site license agreement.

Melb 8521 FaxMail for Windows v5.16

FaxMail for Windows adds full faxing capability to all of your Windows applications. It adds a Fax button to your Windows programs to give you access to all the Fax modems and Fax machines in the world, making them become your printers. FaxMail becomes a part of the actual Microsoft Windows environment by appending itself to all system menus thereby adding its features to all Windows applications. FaxMail has many features. It includes a Fax/Modem-tester, timed sends and a broadcast queue that holds up to 32,000 entries. You can import up to 1000 names and phone numbers into each FaxBook at a time from any xBase data base program, and you can have as many FaxBooks as you want. FaxMail gives you laser quality fax output, making it a great tool for sending just an occasional fax or large numbers of high quality faxes from the background while you work on other tasks. It works in DOS and Windows. This version has improved support for both Windows 3.1x and Windows 95. FaxMail includes support for Microsoft Windows 3.1/95/NT. It requires an 8086/8088 or later processor, 2 MB of RAM and 3 MB of hard disk space. It supports most Fax/Modems. Regn US\$25.

Melb 8602

Fund Manager for Windows 3.X v9.4

Melb 8603

Fund Manager for Win 95 v2.4

Fund Manager is a portfolio management application designed to help individual investors to monitor

and analyse their investments using a wide variety of easy-to-use graphs and reports. Fund Manager accepts price, investment and distribution information as input for its calculations. Prices may be entered manually, imported from online services, or imported from Quicken. An overview, as well as all the documentation for Fund Manager, is available via on-line help from inside the application. To get a quick feel for the capabilities of Fund Manager, simply click on any of the sample icons created by the installation program. These versions have toolbars, new report and graph types, a new data format, improved printing, and more keyboard shortcuts. Both versions use the same data format, so they may be used interchangeably. Fund Manager requires Windows 3.x or Win 95, an 80386 processor and a mouse. Registered users are entitled to 3 years of free technical support from the author. Regn US\$23 for the Windows 3.x version and US\$29 for the Win 95 version. You can upgrade/cross-grade from a previous version for no more than US\$9.

Melb 8671

CD-Quick Cache for Win 95 v2.01

If you've ever wished you could speed up your CD-ROM drive, then CD-Quick Cache is the program for you. CD-Quick will dramatically increase the performance of your CD-ROM drive. By storing frequently read sectors in fast XMS memory, disc reads are almost instantaneous. CD-Quick uses advanced caching techniques and dynamic read ahead buffering to insure top performance. CD-Quick Cache includes CDTEST to measure your CD-ROM drive's performance and the Windows' QUICKMON program to show cache statistics in real time. This version for Win 95 provides for turning off caching the drive for certain types of files. It is also much slimmer than its Windows 3.X partner. This version corrects problems with Win 95 disk utilities, and adds new utilities with an updated Windows 95 graphical interface to allow true measures of the CD-ROM drive's improved performance. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, XMS memory, Win 95 or later and a CD-ROM drive. Regn US\$29.

Melb 8714-8719 Melb PC Internet Kit (Win 95) (6-disk set)

Melb 8820-8823 Melb PC Internet Kit (Windows 3.x) (4-disk set)

These are the standard Internet Kits for the Melb PC Internet Service for Windows 3.x users and Win 95 users. They are based on Microsoft's Internet Explorer and comprise a dialer (Windows 3.x only), web browser, mail and news readers. The Win 95 Kit utilizes the Win 95 Dial-up Network and it automatically configures the dialer for Melb PC. The kits are fully pre-configured and only require you to supply your personal information during the installation process. These sets now contain Internet Explorer version 3.01 for Windows 3.x and version

3.02 for Win 95, as well as updated Dial-Up network icons. The Windows 3.x Kit requires Windows 3.x, an 80386 or later processor, 4 MB of RAM, a VGA monitor, a mouse, a 9600 bps modem and 6 MB of hard disk space for programs and a minimum of 4 MB for data. The Win 95 Kit requires Win 95, an 80486 or later processor with 8 MB RAM, a VGA monitor, a mouse, a 9600 bps modem and about 20 MB of hard disk space. No registration is required for Melb PC members. The Windows 3.x Kit is available for a special price of \$10 for the 4-disk set. The Win 95 Kit is available for a special price of \$20 for the 6-disk set. Note: Disks Melb 8711 to Melb 8713 which contained the previous version of the Melb PC Internet Kit for Windows 3.x have been deleted.

New disks

Melb 2604

Crypt-o-Text v1.23

Crypt-o-Text is a powerful and easy-to-use Windows utility that has been designed to give extra privacy to e-mail messages. Even if you send a message privately, there is still a good chance that others will see the message especially if it is sent over large networks, such as the internet. Using Crypt-o-Text, you can "scramble" your message so that it is unreadable until it is "unscrambled" by the person receiving your message. In addition, you can apply password-protection so that the scrambled message can only be unscrambled by someone who knows the password you used to scramble it. Password-protection is extremely secure! There is no way to unscramble the message if you forget the password (which can be up to 45 characters long). Scrambled messages are formatted so that they're very easy to send over any e-mail system (only low-ASCII characters are used, and each line is only 65 characters wide). Crypt-o-Text can also be used to secure other small pieces of text, provided that they are less than 22 KB in size. It works with Windows 3.x/95/NT. Regn US\$15.

Melb 2605

HTMSTRIP v7.02

HTMSTRIP attempts to read HTML pages, remove the HTML coding, and write the file out as something more useful. It is an ideal way to prepare HTML documents for later retransmission via e-mail (which doesn't support the fonts, pictures, etc, found on such documents). It can be run across an entire subdirectory (such as your entire cache subdirectory), and it will only process the HTML documents that it finds. It will remove all embedded HTML commands, recode the standard HTML "entity references" according to a user-modifiable lookup file. It handles standard indents, headings, menus, selection groups and tables, and it reflows all text as appropriate. It can alert you to possible errors in the HTML code itself. HTMSTRIP is currently geared for handling HTML 3.0 files, including the table extensions from Netscape. The disk also includes a copy

of MOZ which renames the files in your Web cache subdirectory so you can identify them more easily. Both of these programs are Freeware.

Melb 8824 Just the Fax v1.5 (Win 95)

Just the Fax is a powerful, easy to use personal fax program. Its many features include a WYSIWYG fax and cover sheet editor, an unlimited phone number database and an unlimited fax history file. It includes a spelling checker to check fax documents and cover sheets. You can create many cover sheet templates and clone and edit faxes for new recipients. Just the Fax requires Win 95. Regn US\$24.

Melb 8825 Lectra the Reading Trainer v2.30

Lectra is a reading trainer that provides a systematic process you can use to improve your reading skills. There are 14 proposed exercises to assist you to develop your perceptive skills and to enlarge your vocabulary. Lectra automatically builds your exercises, using the text of your choice or text from one of the supplied libraries. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.x or later, 1.5 MB of hard disk space and a mouse. Regn US\$20.

Melb 8827 File Format Encyclopedia v1.01

File Format Encyclopedia is a DOS program that explains the design, concepts, extensions and other particulars about the various file formats in everyday computing. The topics range from Communications, Databases, Executables, Animations, Graphics and Sound, and on to many others. Requires an 80286 or faster processor and a VGA or better graphics card and monitor. No registration fee is applicable, but the author would appreciate a postcard.

Melb 8828 Hardware Book v0.9

The Hardware Book is a technical reference guide about computers and other electronic devices. You'll find the pinouts to most common (and uncommon) connectors available, as well as information about how to build cables, adapters and loopback plugs. Www links to other electronic resources are listed also. The information is presented as a Windows Help file with hypertext links to related topics.

Melb 8829 ByteCatcher v1.02

ByteCatcher is an FTP interface program, that will enable you to upload and to download from FTP servers on the Internet. Connecting to sites is easy, and if it can't get through then it will retry as many times as you decide. If you are disconnected, ByteCatcher will remember what file it was up to, and complete downloading the files to your computer. Requires Win 95 or Windows NT 4.0, 4 MB of RAM, and a connection to the Internet. Regn US\$25.

Melb 8830 Microsoft Personal Web Server v1.0A

Personal Web Server transmits information in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) pages by using the Hypertext Transport Protocol (HTTP). It provides most of the functionality of Microsoft's Internet Information Server, including the ability to publish Web pages on the Internet or over a LAN on an intranet, provide support for Microsoft ActiveX enabled and enhanced programs, and the ability to transmit or receive files by using the FTP services provided. It requires Win 95 or later, a network or modem connection with TCP/IP protocols loaded and a knowledge of HTML creation.

Melb 8831 Visual Basic 5.0 Runtime Library

This is the Visual Basic runtime library for Win 95 users who have applications designed in Visual Basic version 5.0. There are no special system requirements for this program. Freeware.

Melb 8832 Project Brasil v2.1

This simulation is in the same style of SimCity, where you build up Brasil with Police, Residential, Commercial, Community, Civic and other services. But there is a twist. You have to obtain 50% or more of popularity to be re-elected every four years. The increase of the cash and the population of your city, compared with the first of your four-year government, increases your popularity. The lack of something Project Brasil asks you to build (such as schools, nurseries, hospitals, etc) reduces your popularity. Requires Win 95 or later, a VGA or better video card and monitor, and a mouse. Regn US\$19.

Melb 8833 HEXpert for Windows v3.0.05

HEXpert is a Windows-based multi-format binary editor that you can use to view and edit in hex, octal, binary, decimal and ASCII. It supports OEM or ANSI fonts, does block fills and deletes and includes the simultaneous display of 8 different numeric formats (including signed and unsigned integers and floating point). You can edit, search, replace, insert or delete data in any format. You can print the hex, octal or binary dump, highlight blocks and copy or cut and paste to and from the clipboard. HEXpert will work with files as large as 16 MB. All of your options are saved and restored between sessions. The disk contains both 16-bit and 32-bit versions of HEXpert. It requires Windows 3.x or later. Regn US\$20.

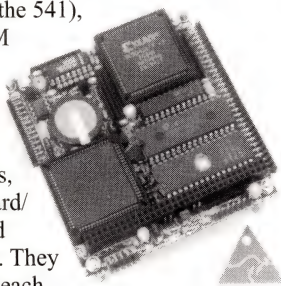
Australian-made Embedded Computers: PC/104 or ISA bus

PC540/1 PC/104 Computers

These computers use the PC/104 bus, an international standard for embedded systems. The X86 instruction sets suit standard PC compilers, or the \$179 Pacific C Compiler. These boards use the 80C188EB and V51 CPUs.

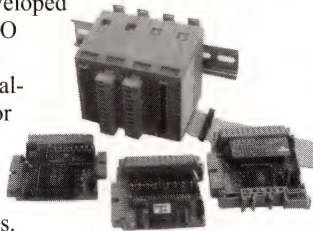
The boards run programs from PROM or a FLASH-based DOS provides the familiar DOS environment. DRAM to 1 Mbyte or CMOS RAM to 512 Kbyte is available.

Both boards have two serial ports (550 compatible on the 541), RTC, EEPROM and Xilinx gate arrays for additional I/O. The 540 has 40 I/O lines, The 541 has hard/floppy disk and LPT interfaces. They are \$350/\$450 each.



JBLOCK Modular I/O for PCs, Embedded Single-board CPUs

JED has developed a range of I/O modules for industrial real-world I/O for a variety of applications driven from SBCs or PCs.



A 26-way ribbon cable, called a JBUS cable, runs in multi-drop mode from an I/O port on any single-board computer to a 26-pin connector on each I/O module. JBUS has an 8-bit address and bi-directional data bus, and low-true READ, WRITE, and ADDRESS strobes. Timing is simple: strobe address and then data into the modules. An address switch in the top of each module sets up the address. Up to 63 modules are addressable, with 8 I/O per module. Modules released are 8 relay out, 8 opto in, 8 analog (12-bit) in and PC printer port to JBUS.

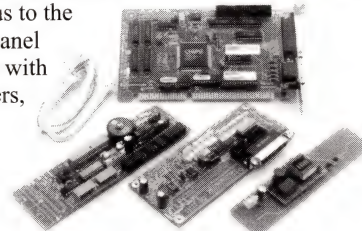
\$300 PROM Programmer

This no-fuss programmer plugs into a PC's printer port, and automatically writes PROMs from 8 k to 4 Mbytes.



AT350, AT351 LCD/EL VGA

JED has released a family of ISA-bus VGA interfaces to electroluminescent, mono, passive and active (TFT) liquid crystal panels. These boards offer a total solution, from the ISA bus to the back-panel boards with inverters, etc.



JED Microprocessors Pty. Ltd. Phone (03) 9762 3588 Fax (03) 9762 5499

Office 7, 5/7 Chandler Road (PO Box 30), Boronia, Victoria, 3155

See our data sheets at www.jedmicro.com.au

Melb 8834**EZ Macros for Windows v1.1**

EZ Macros is an easy-to-use keystroke and mouse macro recorder for use with Win 95 and NT. It is useful for performing repetitive keystrokes, mouse movements and mouse clicks with a single keystroke. You can also have EZ Macros launch a program by hitting a hot key. The program uses a wizard to guide you through the process of creating a macro. Each step comes with complete instructions on the window describing what to do. The speed of the macros can be adjusted to playback at the recorded speed or at a 'fast' (almost instantaneous) speed. It requires Win 95 or NT. Regn US\$30.

Melb 8835**LAN-Alarm v3.0**

LAN-Alarm is a network management tool for Network Administrators. It can notify a network administrator's pager when a Novell file server or any device with an IP address goes down. It will monitor network devices 24 hours a day and determine if they are up and running. It monitors Novell file servers, or any device running Novell NetWare 2.x or later, such as gateways, asynchronous servers, etc. By loading a TCP/IP driver, LAN-Alarm will also monitor any device with an IP address such as Windows NT servers, Unix servers, database servers, bridges and routers. It requires a Numeric or Alphanumeric pager, any Novell Network 2.x (or later)/Windows NT/Unix server with an IP address, a modem and a network card. Regn is dependent upon the number of network devices you wish to monitor.

Melb 8836**VGA-COPY/386 v6.23**

VGA-COPY/386 is a tool for the formatting, copying, checking, comparing, storing and restoring of images of floppy disks. All of these features are fast, and support up to four disk-drives on up to two controllers. All DOS disk formats (including the 3.5-inch 2.88 MB disk) and the special formats that provide up to 1722 KB capacity on a common 3.5-inch high density diskette. The graphical user interface featuring 3D-icons, switches and mouse support makes it very easy to use. VGA-COPY/386 reads or writes a complete 1.44 MB disk in just 36 seconds. It also provides a high level of security by checking written data on the same level as professional copy machines. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM, a VGA or better video card and monitor and a mouse. Regn US\$40.

Melb 8837**DJPro v1.2B**

DJPro is a music collection database designed and written specifically for a professional Disk Jockey. It is quick and responsive, even on low-end systems, yet it was designed to handle the large collections owned by DJs (typically thousands of albums and disks) without bogging down. Quick data entry, flexible (and fast) search routines and a wide variety of printed reports, give it true flexibility and ease of use. Requires DOS 3.1 or later and an 8086 or faster processor. Freeware.

Melb 8838**Midi Ace v2.0**

Midi Ace is the perfect Windows program to select and play MIDI files. The program is simple, intuitive and functional. While Midi Ace can be used by anyone interested in playing MIDI music, it is primarily intended as a design application for musicians to easily play MIDI files while rehearsing, and during live performances. The features in the program include playlist construction, low memory requirements and on-line help. Midi Ace requires an 80386 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM, a VGA or better graphics card and monitor, a sound card, a mouse and Windows 3.1 or later. Regn US\$15.

Melb 8839**n-Track v0.99**

n-Track is a digital multi-track recorder program for the Win 95 and Windows NT operating systems. This program will turn your computer into a powerful multi-track recorder, without expensive hardware requirements. Working with n-Track is easy: to start a new song, just record the first track (usually the rhythm base), then click the stop button. Now you are ready to add a new track or to overdub the one previously recorded: click again on the record button, make sure you are ready to play and click on the OK button. To edit a track that you have recorded with a wave editor (such as Cool Edit on disk Melb 8705), simply double-click on the desired track in the list box. n-Track requires an 80486DX-66 or faster processor, 8 MB of RAM, Win 95 or Windows NT 4.0 or later, a full-duplex sound card and a microphone. Regn US\$15.

Melb 8840**Remote Process & Shutdown Service v 1.20C**

This Application will enable processes to be started remotely by another system attached to the same network. It can even be used from a dialup remote access link. It will also enable a system to be remotely logged off or shutdown. This is a 32-bit application designed to operate on Win 95 or Windows NT. This release contains an improved interactive control panel and client programs. It requires Win 95/NT 3.51 or later and a network setup or modem connection for dial-in access. Regn US\$15 for a two-user license.

Melb 8841**Super NoteTab v2.22**

Super NoteTab is a feature-rich replacement program for NotePad supplied with Windows 3.x and Windows 95, which has a selection of original productivity tools that you will find in no other editor. The editor is capable of opening a very large number of files (the actual limit being determined by the amount of free system resources). Each document is displayed on a tabbed page. This makes it easy to switch between them. A separate window, called the Document Selector, makes it easy to find a specific document when a large number of them are open. Super NoteTab requires Win 95 or later, 4 MB of RAM and a mouse. Freeware.

Melb 8842**ACDSee 32 v2.0**

ACDSee 32 is the 32-bit (Win 95/NT) version of ACDSee, one of the most popular image viewers for Windows 3.x. It is basically two tools in one. As an image viewer, ACDSee stands unsurpassed in its ability to quickly decode and display images. High quality output is another advantage of ACDSee, with single and double-pass dithering algorithms which allow you to make optimal use of your display's capabilities. You can scroll, zoom, or use any other function while ACDSee is decoding which means you'll spend less time waiting and more time doing. As an image browser, ACDSee is the best choice for exploring your file system for images of interest. A high speed preview feature lets you quickly and easily take a peek at images without interrupting or slowing down your exploration. A special Thumbnail Mode shows a thumbnail of each image instead of the normal file icons, enabling you to visually browse through a lot of images very quickly. A unique feature included in ACDSee is the shortcut pane, a list of shortcuts to frequently accessed folders which helps you to quickly move and copy files, or browse the folders themselves. It requires Win 95 or Windows NT 4.0 or later, an 80486 or faster processor, 8 MB of RAM, a mouse and a VGA or better video card and monitor. Regn US\$30.

Melb 8843**Firehand Ember v2.1.4**

Firehand Ember is an image viewer, organiser and manager for Microsoft Win 95 and Microsoft Windows NT 3.51 or later, that enables you to preview and work with whole directories of JPEG, GIF, and BMP files at the same time. It requires Win 95/NT 3.51 or later, 8 MB of RAM and a mouse. Regn US\$20.

Melb 8844 Microsoft ActiveMovie v1.0

Microsoft ActiveMovie enables the Media Player program supplied with the Win 95 and Windows NT 4.0 operating systems to play MPEG-1 video files and Quicktime MOV files. Full support for DirectX drivers is included. It requires Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0 or later, Media Player and appropriate drivers for your Multimedia hardware devices. DirectX is supported but is not required.

Melb 8845**Vulcan CityDistance 97 v1.10**

Vulcan CityDistance is a program with over 1900 cities listed worldwide. It can be used for calculating distances under Win 95/NT4. Calculations are displayed in Kilometers, Miles and Nautical Miles. Results can be saved as text files or bitmap files or set as Windows wallpaper. Requires an 80386 or faster processor, 4 MB of RAM and Win 95/NT 4.0 or later. Regn US\$20.

Melb 8846**ShortKeys v1.0B**

ShortKeys is a macro utility that you can use to setup replacement text or paragraphs for any given number of user defined keystrokes. It monitors the keyboard activity and anytime a user-defined keystroke combination is typed in, it will be replaced with the replacement text. ShortKeys is intended for use with programs that require text input such as an editor, word processor, e-mail program, etc. It replaces a word with a sentence, paragraph or several paragraphs allowing you to save time by not having to key in the sentence or paragraphs. Errors in typing can be reduced. You simply choose a word and associate it with the replacement text. You can enter up to 1000 word and replacement text combinations (of up to 3000 characters). It can be used for letter greetings, names and addresses, sales orders and quotations, legal/medical/dental documentation and many other repetitive text needs. ShortKeys requires an 80286 processor, VGA graphics, Windows 3.x/95/NT, 4 MB of RAM and 800 KB of hard disk space. Regn US\$20.

Melb 8847**Rhyme Finder Rhyming Dictionary v2.0**

Poetry takes two forms, Prose and Rhyming. This Windows-based program only deals with Rhyming Poetry. It enables a poetry writer to access a rhyming dictionary that contains single, double and triple rhymes for the 15 most used vowel sounds. These are organised by rhyme groups dependent upon the related consonants that are used. It also contains detailed Help files on-line, including a brief tutor on rhyming poetry rules. This program does not rely on any special DLL files for its operation. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.x or later, VGA graphics and a mouse. Regn US\$5.

Melb 8848 CyberSky v2.0 (Win 3.x)
Melb 8849 CyberSky v2.0 (Win 95)

CyberSky is a colourful, easy-to-use, astronomy program that transforms your computer screen into a planetarium, enabling you to learn about astronomy by exploring the sky in the past, present, and future! It is an excellent way for you to learn the names and locations of the constellations and the stars and to become familiar with the motions of the sun, moon, and planets across the sky. Once you've learned the basics, CyberSky is a great way to check out "what's up" tonight without leaving your desk. You can also use it to find out what you'll be able to see next weekend, or next month, or even what the sky looked like on the day you were born. One of CyberSky's most powerful and educational features is its ability to animate the display, so that you can see "movies" of the changing appearance of the sky over time. CyberSky prints sky charts and its Help File contains educational exercises, diagrams, tables and a glossary. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, MS Windows 3.x or MS Windows 95, 8 MB of RAM, 2 MB of hard disk space and a mouse. It also needs a video card capable of displaying 256 or more colours. Reg US\$25. Site licenses available for educational institutions.

Melb 8850-8851 Universal Mortgage and Loans v1.49 (Win 95) (2-disk set)

This is a Windows-based, comprehensive personal mortgage program that provides calculations, projections, graphs and comparisons for mortgages of every type and frequency of payment: weekly, weekly accelerated, biweekly, biweekly accelerated, monthly and semimonthly, with additional payments. It can be used for car loans, personal loans

and consumer loans as well as mortgages. You can compare up to 12 different payment schedules at a time to determine which is best for your needs and perhaps save you tens of thousands of dollars in interest payments over the life of the loan. The interest rate can be input to 3 decimal places. The program is both easy to use and easy to understand and it has excellent on-line help. It requires Win 95 or later. Regn US\$15. A Windows 3.x version of this program is available on disk Melb 8769.

Deletions

The following disks have been deleted because they are duplicates or earlier versions of other disks, or they are time-limited:

Melb 8523 Preschool Pack
 Melb 8584 Turbo Browser for Win 95
 Melb 8621 Designer Envelopes and Letterhead Stationery
 Melb 8776 WinSpeech (for Win 95/NT)
 Melb 8820-8823 Melb PC Internet Kit (Win 3.x)

Corrections

Last month the version of Sound Gadget Pro was reported as v1.0.5. It should be v1.5.0.

Geoclock (v7.3) was reported as an update for disk Melb 8438. This was incorrect. Disk Melb 8438 contains Geoclock for DOS (v7.1). Geoclock for Windows (version 7.3) is on disk Melb 8819.

Note

We would like to thank John Monsanto for advising us of some apparent inconsistencies between the catalog listing and the various summary lists. The corrections will be included in the next release of the catalog. □

Membership

Why not give a gift memberships in Melb PC? PC Update, BBS, SIGs, Training, Internet, Dial Help, Monthly Meetings, Shareware, First Aid... all this and growing. Anyone who uses a PC will benefit from membership of Melb PC.

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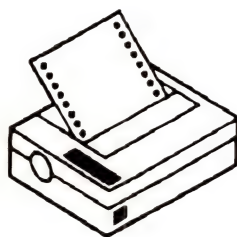
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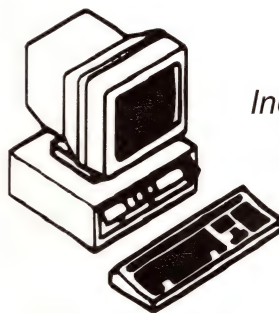
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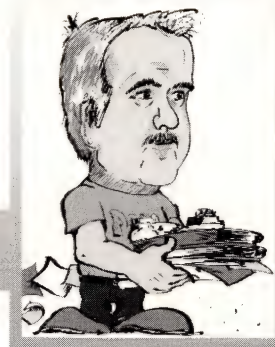
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Computers and SOHO businesses

WHAT I THOUGHT...WHAT I KNOW

Rob Pickford



Ed: Rob Pickford ran a small computer business in rural Victoria. Consultancy formed a key component of the service offered. He says that since learning that he is not a businessman, he has preferred to teach and write about computers instead. The loss of Rob's services to Victorian businesses is Melb PC's gain, since Rob has the perfect combination of experience and skills to share with his fellow Melb PC members. Members considering introducing computers into a small business would do well to read this article, and learn, from Rob's experience (and his mistakes).

I'll buy a computer... it will fix my business right up

What I thought then: Inefficient accounting practises? Poorly conceived cash and credit methods? Hopeless record keeping systems? Yes I had them all, but did I worry! Not on your Nelly! I'll buy a computer. Computers will fix all that, and if not, well, they'll certainly keep me occupied.

What I know now: A computer, sadly, will not fix dubious business bookkeeping and bad practises. Experienced business people all insist that you should research your business needs carefully with reference to your business plan and future goals. (If you do not have a business plan, Return to Start, do not pass Go, do not collect \$200.) They insist that bookkeeping and business practises must be sound and efficient when commencing to computerise. Many small businesses survive (for a while) with absolutely no idea of correct information and record keeping systems at all. This is not however an advisable path for anyone wishing to succeed in any business today. A computer can be an essential tool in your business, saving hours of tedious work. Good software can provide timely information for decision making. Equally, moving to a computer can result in frustration, lost hours and duplication of systems, if it is not planned carefully. There are many pitfalls for the unwary or ill prepared. Getting it right is not magic, it will only happen with careful planning and a lot of work.

How do I get started?

What I thought then: My accountant would charge for helping to advise on how best to adapt my business to the computer. So I checked out where he drinks and what clubs he attends. Nothing like a round of golf for free "advice" and as a bonus, my doctor also plays there.

What I know now: Establishing your business system is going to cost a lot of money, not just for the computer and software, but in the hours and hours of work required to establish a new system or transfer existing methods. The planning stage is not the time to skimp. A dollar saved in planning could cost twenty in lost time or two hundred in bad choices and errors further down the track. When making a purchase it pays to remember that in general, salesmen are there to sell. They are not always the most informed, they are not always the most helpful (especially if you're a woman) and they do not necessarily have your best interests at heart. Bargains and the biggest, grunty-est system for the least money may not be the most advantageous purchase. It pays to ask more than one reputable retailer to explain the solution they would propose in meeting your identified business needs, then comparing the different proposals.

Adequate research is essential prior to approaching sales staff, it is the most effective obstacle to impulse buying. Membership in Melbourne PC user group is still the best bang-for-bucks buying I know of. As a member, the resources at your disposal when you are researching your business computing needs are priceless.

Choosing software

What I thought then: A good computer accounting package will do away with the need for my accountant!

What I know now: That is one of the great myths of business. Unless you have a sound and current knowledge of accounting practises, no machine or software is going to supercede your accountant. Any move to computers in business must be carried out with the blessing and support of your accountant, or at least, "an accountant". Good

**Hah! Boogey-
man stories
don't fri...**

software will, however, put more timely and relevant information at your fingertips. It will relieve much of the tedium of bookkeeping and it will enable you to play "what-if" games and have a more informed view of the day-to-day state of your business. Choosing the wrong software package can be a disaster, spend the time to look at a variety of different packages. Start your research by asking your accountant for his or her views. Next consult your peers. There are many packages, the majority home-grown Australian, that are tailored to one particular industry or business. Look for one that not only performs the basics well, but suits your style or approach. Try using a package with real-life examples before making a decision. Glitzy programs may look great on the surface but not handle common problems or transactions. Talk to current users of the package if possible, if you have access, hit the BBS and ask questions.

Let's get cracking

What I thought then: Modern software is so user friendly any one can use it. I'll work it all out then teach my staff.

What I know now: Perhaps the greatest myth peddled by Microsoft, *et al*, is *user friendly*. Learning how to use sophisticated programs will take time and effort before you gain any degree of competence.

Yes, you can quickly learn to operate some of the basics effectively, but do not rely on this. Professional training such as is available from Melb PC or specialist industry training groups can have a direct result in dollars saved and crises avoided. For example, in my experience many

businesses do not use their expensive word processing and database packages effectively. The systems employed are a mish-mash of electronic word processing and the old manual system they can't quite get around to changing. It is all too common to see staff typing or writing envelopes individually, working at a table beside an envelope capable printer. Already owning all the hardware and software needed, they simply don't have time, money or commitment to take the next step. Spending dollars on training in mailmerge and database can save hours in routine mailings. Effective targeted training for all relevant staff should be an integral part of your planning. While home users and enthusiasts, myself included, take pride in nutting out software and teaching ourselves, there is generally no place in business today for this method.

Support me...please

What I thought then: My neighbour (who knows about computers) will save me a fortune. He can be contacted at any hour and with a little persuasion will do it for a couple of stubbies. So, I get my little problems fixed with little risk to my precious and indispensable business records—after a few goes, anyway. (It only took a week to rekey it all—that's not much, is it?) Of course, I don't see as much of him now...

What I know now: Find good support and hold on to it. Support is usually expensive. Part of initial research is identifying what after-sales support is available. The less you know, the greater your need for support is likely to be, so factor it into your plan.

Games, games and more games

What I thought then: Sharing the heart of your business system with recreational programs is a great way to help fill up the vast empty space of your hard drive. So what if it occasionally destabilises or crashes your system. What's a virus or two between friends? It's a small price to pay for the fun you can squeeze in between work.

What I know now: Business is business. Often the crashes, glitches or failures come

hot on the heels of that latest shareware game. Games are not part of a business system. In a small or home office it is often acceptable (if not essential) to use the computer in a dual role, particularly if you have school-age children. But cover your bases. Ensure that you spell out what is and is not acceptable use of your business computer. In particular, know what the kids are proposing to do. If they are unable or unwilling to provide adequate detail, I recommend that they don't proceed. Be aware that copying software that you have not paid for is called software piracy. (This sounds better than calling it theft.) Stealing games or other software carries a penalty of up to \$250,000 dollars. Huh! Now do I scare easy? (Wot's a quarter of a mill anyway?) So what if they prosecute both your business and you personally.

Getting down to routines

What I thought then: Only neurotic compulsive pedants with poor memories update their records daily and keep everything in order. Real people only need to grab their handful of notes scribbled on the back of envelopes and scrappy receipts once or twice a month. Don't worry...it'll all come back to me. Tax time's months away.

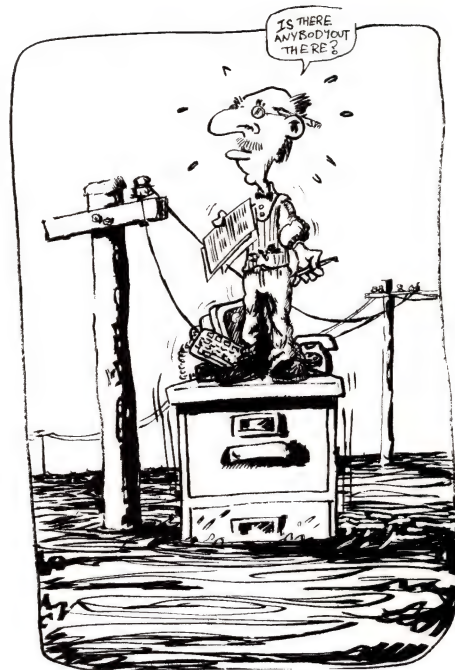
What I know now: Good routines are critical to success. A collection of shoe boxes full of "data" is not the way to go. I know, from personal experience. Keeping up-to-date and regular is the best way to avoid hang-over problems that loiter around waiting for the day you've enough time to solve them.

Backup

What I thought then: Backing up is for amateurs, people who have no protecting angel and scaredy-cats afraid to gamble.

So what if you've spent 18 or 20 hours working on your books. Hard drive crashes ...Hah! Boogey-man stories don't fri...

What I know now: A business system requires a serious means of backing up. You must ensure the backup tools are in proportion to the value of the information. Floppy disks are fine up to a point, but if your data is valuable, use more precise



means. When purchasing your system give this some thought and add in a tape backup or zip drive. (Your first crash will pay for most of it.) In addition to the correct tools, use a method of sequential backups over time. Most backup programs or media will carry an explanation of the "son-father-grandfather" method. Once you grasp the method, adjust it to suit the needs of your business. That covers you for the possible loss or damage of a backup, and you can also go backwards should a problem occur and be itself backed up.

About the author

Rob Pickford, pickford@ren.netconnect.com.au, is a long time Melb PC member with an interest in computers, writing and cartooning. He lives in Stawell (three hours out of Melbourne) and enjoys the benefits of country life (like *mark-up* and *STD*). His ambition in life is to master the art of "hanging inverted in a tree, sleeping 23 hours a day".

More of his work can be seen on his home page at <http://www.netconnect.com.au/~pickford> □

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Melb PC BBS: Fidonet ten years on

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The Melbourne PC User Group BBS is celebrating its tenth year of operation as a Fidonet BBS in July of 1997, this article is dedicated to the members and volunteers who contributed to its running and care over the years.

Background

The BBS was originally created so that members could access Fidonet message conferences and a limited range of shareware library files. Today, the BBS has at least 1000 message conferences members can access to increase their knowledge, not only of computers, but in other areas too, such as hobbies, sport, business, health, etc. On the freeware/shareware files front, we now have more than 27,000 files (most of which are not duplicated in the Shareware Library) that members can download. In short, although the BBS has grown, it's still providing members with useful information and serving as a repository for popular shareware/freeware files. We also have online games and chat facilities and Fidonet netmail.

The main operations of the BBS are to fetch and forward Fidonet conference messages and personal Netmail (i.e. person-to-person and system-to-system messages) daily. Less frequently, it is used to fetch the latest shareware files from the file distribution network.

The *PC Update* team also uses the BBS in the production of the magazine. *PC Update* authors upload articles to the BBS. Editors and Sub-editors download those article files to edit. Edited submissions are uploaded to the BBS for the production manager to collect and set.

Some interesting statistics

- At peak times we have between 55 and 60 tasks running on the comms server machine
- There are more than 40 individual third-party programs used to give the BBS its look and feel
- On average we get about 10 MB of Fidonet conference mail every day, and 12-24 MB of files from the file distribution network every week (that's in addition to what our members upload)
- Of the members who use an offline

reader, about 500 use Blue Wave, the rest of those that use an offline reader, use the QWK offline mail system

- The most popular files downloaded from the Melb PC BBS are the Internet Access Kits
- Although message traffic in local areas is not as high as it is in Fidonet echoes, it is brisk and the relatively well used, particularly Internet, Help and General areas
- During busy times we usually have at least six users in online chat or playing online games.

A brief history

1985

A BBS which eventually becomes the PC Connection BBS is founded..

March 1987

The Melb PC BBS with Fidonet technology, Opus Fidonet software on a Trigem XT..

July 1987

A second line is added using DESQview.

Aug 1987

ZModem file transfer protocol.

March 1988

New machine, 386/16 Wyse.

April 1989

Machines based in Melb PC's (then) office in Cecil St, South Melbourne.

March 1990

Maximus v2.00 installed (replaces Opus).

November 1990

Second machine (386 DX 33 running TBBS BBS software) added and used as a separate files BBS which was not Fidonet enabled. This machine, over a period of time, had many modems connected to it, however the machine eventually died due to sudden catastrophic hard drive failure. All files and message functions were recombined into a single-machine BBS service.

June 1993

First BBS subcommittee formed.

July 1993 onwards

Messages BBS dies. Drive stiction was the primary cause. A switch to OS/2 v2.0 and Maximus for OS/2 was made. A switch to a 486DX/33 machine, is authorised, resulting in what we then thought was blindingly fast access for the **two** lines that then existed. Shortly after that, the first BBS team was formed. Then the Files

BBS went to the scrap heap, thanks to a massive hard drive failure. The read/write heads literally broke off and you could hear them rattling around when you shook the drive!

At that point, a monumental decision was made, to increase lines on the OS/2 Maximus BBS in order to incorporate all the former file areas and users of the demised system. This took a lot of time, with accompanying pain and very late nights.

We then grew, progressively, from eight, to 12, to 16, to 24 and finally, to today's 34 lines!

Hardware in use today

- Acer Altos 7000V and 700/e series Pentium 166 and 133 servers; with 64 MB and 96 MB RAM respectively and about 16 GB of Fast SCSI and Fast/Wide SCSI hard drives
- The main filebase is spread over about 13 physical drives. One 4 x CD-ROM (also SCSI) is used to read data from CD-ROMS as required
- An intelligent 32-port Digiboard
- Two onboard serial ports to give us 34 input lines to the comms server (Acer Altos 700/e)
- The comms server is connected to two racks of Netcomm M34F rack modems (16 modems in each rack) and two stand alone modems, a Hayes Optima v.34 28,800 and a Maestro 28,800 v.34
- An off-the-shelf LAN (local area network) connects the file server (file base and other essential files) and the comm server (BBS software and other essential files)
- IBM OS/2 Warp Connect v3 and IBM's network operating system LanServer 4
- Network hardware includes IBM Token Ring 16/4 cards and an IBM Token Ring Hub with twisted pair cabling
- Miscellaneous equipment, including a 17-inch SVGA monitor to view comms server operations and a 14-inch SVGA monitor for the fileserver, a Conner DAT tape backup drive for monthly and quarterly backup of critical system configurations files, an APC UPS to prevent brownouts from affecting operations.

Phillip Lew



The BBS team

The volunteers that work on the BBS have changed over the last several months. Your current team is

Sysop: Philip Lew
Co-Sysops: Don McKenzie
Doug Brooke
Jean D'Andrea
Asst. Sysop: Michael Marquart

Software in use today

We use Maximus for OS/2 v3.01, BinkleyTerm Fidonet Mailer v2.60 and Fastecho Fidonet Mail Tosser v1.46

There are also the File Tagger, the Blue Wave Offline Mail Door and less visible programs that handle file download counters, top users (downloaders/uploaders, messengers), birthday listings, etc.

How it works

The user base is backed up daily. New user registrations are handled by the office.

Files uploaded and those fetched from the file distribution network are scanned for viruses, checked for suitability and tossed to a user-visible area at least twice a week. Other functions, such as games maintenance and new files announcements (listings) are fully automatic.

Internet versus BBS

The Internet is very popular and getting more so, but the BBS still has its supporters, and some advantages over the Internet for some tasks. For example, free/cheaper access at the cost of a phone call. Some members find it easier to find their way around the BBS. Downloads are much quicker via the BBS. And some members find the BBS comms programs easier to configure than those required for the Internet.

The future

There are many courses of action to address these negative effects that are quite feasible and are within the realms of the possible using current software and other third-party utilities. Some of the

ideas being pursued include allowing users to access Internet e-mail and newsgroups at much lower cost than live Internet using a store and forward arrangement; offline games and improved online chat services. Other possibilities include using the BBS to act as a FTP site on the Internet or being able to access BBS from the Internet. This access can also be limited to those who are a Melb PC member/subscriber. One of the many things we are looking at includes a major rework using a different operating system, utilities and BBS software, however this development cycle is a somewhat slow and expensive process.

Finally a big thank you to all users who have accessed our BBS over many years. Without your continued support, we would not be where we are today. □

HARD DISK UPGRADES

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1Gb Western Digital HDD	266.70
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1.6Gb Western Digital HDD	293.37
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2.5Gb Western Digital HDD	351.79
3.1Gb Western Digital HDD	394.97
4.1Gb Western Digital HDD	473.71
1.2Gb Quantum Fireball 4500 RPM	285.75
1.2Gb Quantum Fireball 4500 RPM SCSI	349.25
2.1Gb Quantum Fireball 4500 RPM	320.04
2.1Gb Quantum Fireball 4500 RPM SCSI	438.15
3.2Gb Quantum Fireball 4500 RPM	412.75
2Gb SCSI IBM 5400 RPM	541.02
4Gb SCSI IBM Capricorn	894.08
9Gb SCSI IBM Scorpion	2,260.60
1Gb Medallist Seagate SCSI 4500 RPM	246.38
1Gb Seagate Hawk	500.38
1Gb Seagate Ultra Hawk	584.20
2Gb Seagate Hawk Ultra SCSI	760.73
2Gb Seagate Hawk Ultra Wide SCSI	877.57
2Gb Seagate Barracuda SCSI	887.73
2Gb Seagate Ultra Wide Barracuda	970.28
4Gb Seagate Ultra Barracuda	1,346.20
4Gb Seagate Ultra Wide Barracuda	1,430.02
9Gb Seagate Ultra Barracuda	2,505.71
9Gb Seagate Ultra Wide Barracuda	2,586.99
4.5Gb Seagate Cheetah	1,762.76
9Gb Seagate Ultra Cheetah	5,600.70

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Setting up for a PAP login

TUTORIAL

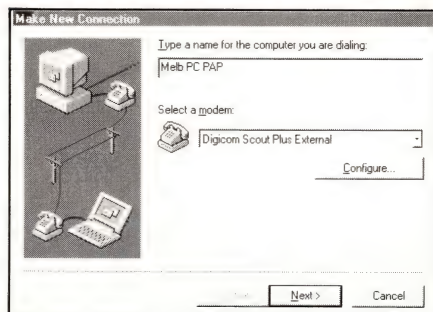
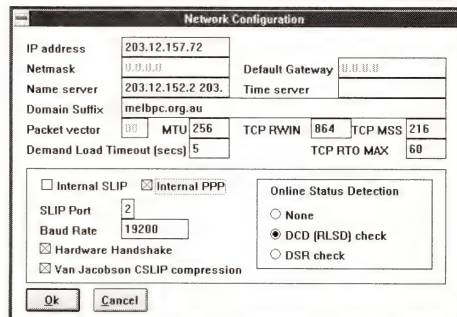
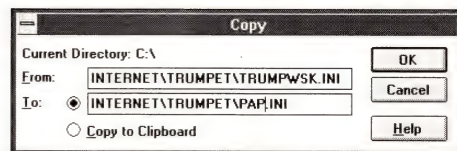
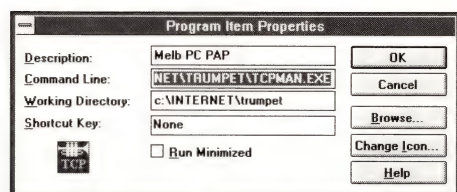
Lynn Pollock



This is how to add the ability to log in using Password Authentication Protocol (PAP) on the Melb PC Internet service.

You should note that it is the group's intention to move to PAP login exclusively (which work with the PPP protocol), eventually phasing out SLIP. There are separate instructions for members using

- The original Slip Kit
- The Windows 3.1 Internet Kit (MPC16INT.EXE)
- The Windows 95 Internet Kit (MPC32INT.EXE).



A) For all versions of the Slip Kit installed as C:\INTERNET

If you installed your kit in another directory and/or on another drive, substitute the path to your Internet setup in the following commands.

To make a new connection for PAP

- Hold down the Control key
- Drag the Trumpet Icon to an additional location within the Group Window
- Release the Control key
- Highlight this new Icon
- Select File/Properties
- Rename icon "Melb PC PAP" (Figure 1)
- In the same window, change the command line to the following

C:\INTERNET\TRUMPET\TCPMAN.EXE
-INIPATH=C:\INTERNET\TRUMPET\PAP.INI

- Using File Manager (Internet\Trumpet Directory) make a copy of TRUMPWSK.INI and call it PAP.INI (Figure 2)
- Double click on the Melb PC PAP icon
- Go to File/Setup and transfer the 'X' from SLIP to PPP (Figure 3)
- Go to File/PPP Options and put the 'X' in Use PAP
- Enter Username and Password in the boxes as required
- Go to Dialler/Setup.cmd and change phone number to 96864506
- (Username and Password in the following boxes may be deleted)
- Logon via PAP using this new Icon.

Figures 1 and 2 (above) and 3 (left).
Setting up PAP with the original Slip Kit

B) For the Windows 3.1 Internet Kit (MPC16INT.EXE)

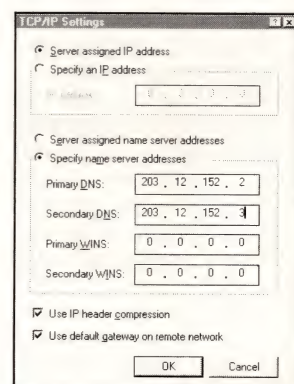
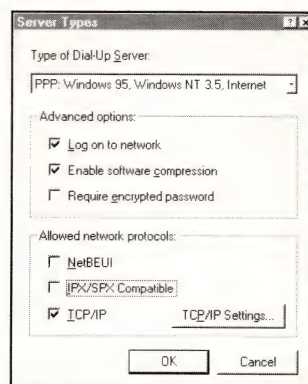
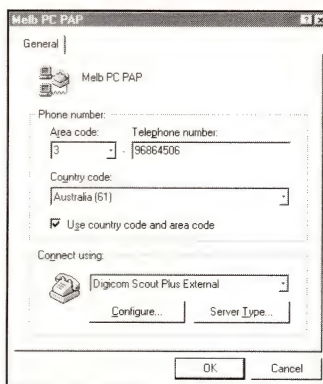
Locate the file called ICWMAN16.EXE in the directory where you installed the Internet Kit. Normally this is C:\EXPLORE.

"Run" this file and complete all the following information

- Call the New connection Melb PC PAP
- Phone number 96864506
- Enter your Username
- Enter your Password
- Next screen enter nothing
- DNS 203.12.152.2 203.12.152.3
- NO Mail, NO News
- Finish
- Logon via PAP using this new Icon.

C) For the Windows 95 Internet Kit (MPC32INT.EXE)

- Open My computer
- Open Dial-Up Networking
- Open Make New Connection (Figure 4)
- Name connection "Melb PC PAP"
- Enter phone no. 96864506 (Figure 5)
- Finish
- Highlight Melb PC PAP and use right Mouse button to access the properties dialog boxes
- Select Server Type
- Remove all ticks except TCP/IP (Figure 6)
- Select TCP/IP Settings
- Enter Primary DNS (203.12.152.2) and Secondary DNS (203.12.152.3) (Figure 7)
- Finish
- Logon via PAP using this new Icon. □



Figures 4 (above), 5, 6 and 7 (right).
Setting up PAP with the Win 95 Internet Kit

Random access



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

John Swale

Answers received

From Tim Weeks: Owen Bentley had a problem with his ISP, Internex. I suggest that he talks to Greg Holloway, the Sysop, using the Helpdesk numbers, or e-mail address that he should have received when he first gained access. Otherwise, he could post a message in the newsgroup *connexus.general* asking for help.

Questions and answers

- Q** I have three hard disks—a normal C:, and 1.6 GB split in half for D: and E:. When I download from the Internet I get a message that I am running out of disk space and need to clear the Recycle Bin. There is very little on D: and E:. What is the quickest way of bypassing C: ? Would Partition Magic help?
- A** There are a number of things you can do. Tell your applications that they should use drive D: for saved files. Install any new software on D: or E:. Delete any files in the TEMP directories, e.g. C:\WINDOWS\TEMP. Run SCANDISK to recovery any lost clusters. Change the size of your swap file. These will give temporary relief. For the longer term, use a program like COA32 (Change Of Address) to move programs from C: to either D: or E:. COA32 is on the BBS.
- Q** I am using compressed drives at home with Win 95 with no problems. I'm considering using compressed drives on a network. Should I have any concerns for my data?
- A** 1: I find that uncompresses won't work. You need room to uncompress and even when created, it's not recognised, so you are stuck with the compressed disk.
- A** 2: I have used compression for two years with no problems. It is certainly useful for machines with small disks. These days disks are so cheap it is usually unnecessary.

Over to You

Please contact me if you have any comments on the answers given; can provide a reply for the unanswered questions; or if you cannot attend the monthly meeting and would like a question asked and included in this column.

To contact me: write to me care of the office; leave a message on the BBS or telephone me on (03) 9270 6115 BH (03) 9857 5567 AH or e-mail me at jswale@melbpc.org.au

Note: Please contact commercial distributors before asking a question here. In all cases mention version numbers.

- A** 3: I have a LAN and two Win 95 PCs using it without problems. Performance degradation on a compressed drive should not be noticeable. Bigger disks are better, because if something goes wrong it is much harder to fix a compressed drive.
- Q** Win 95 recommends closing down all other programs when installing new software. How do you close background programs that do not appear on the task bar?
- A** You may not need to remove them but in some cases the new program may fail to install correctly or fail to run. Always close the MS Office bar and any programs on the task bar. If you press Ctl+Alt+Del once you will get a list of background programs. Close any that you recognise, but be careful that they are not required by Win 95. If you close Explorer you will close Windows.
- Q** I want to remove some icons from my Win 95 desktop. However the system wants to remove the programs too. How do I just remove the icons?
- A** You have placed your data in a folder that is reserved for program shortcuts. Use Explorer and Find the folder that contains the files you want to remove. Then move the files from there to the folder where they should be.
- Q** I have been using a CD-ROM that installed QuickTime on my PC. As a result, my word processing has slowed down significantly. Do I need to uninstall QuickTime or what other remedy is there?
- A** There are many versions of QuickTime. I would uninstall it and use a later version. Check your hard disk light during the period when the PC is slowing down. A lot of activity may indicate that there is excessive paging going on. In this case you may need to look at adjusting the size of the swap file.
- Q** I am having trouble with my Internet connection being cut off. Is there any truth in the story that disconnection can be caused by a Touchfone 200 recharging its memory directly from the line? If so, how do I identify if my phone is one of the problem ones?
- A** Older Touchfone models exhibit this behavior. They have membrane keys on the bottom panel. New models (with push button keys) do not seem to produce the problem. If problems persist you could unplug your phone while you are online.

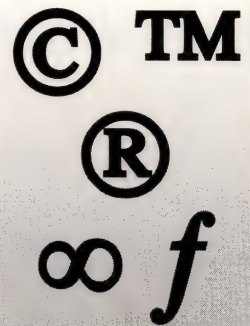
Unanswered questions

- Q** I've read that you can set up HyperTerminal PE v2 (under Win 95) in host mode, but have lost the details. What are the settings/procedure or where I can read up on this?
- Q** I tried to use Hotmail, a free e-mail service, but I received the following message "Intrusion Logged. Access denied....you will need to contact your system administrator." Who is the system administrator for Melb PC and can he rectify this problem for me?
- Q** When I try to restart Win 95 via the shutdown menu I get a flashing cursor and locked keyboard. I can restart in DOS mode, however when I type exit to return to Win 95 the same thing happens. PS: The normal shutdown menu ("You can now turn off the computer") works.
- Q** I have a 486/66 computer with 1 GB hard disk and Win 95. I want to purchase a new system and transfer the programs and data. I used Lap Link when I updated to my present system with Windows 3.1, but I believe that it is not suitable for transferring Win 95 programs. Is this so and what program would be suitable for transferring Win 95 programs and data?
- Q** I run Win 95 Plus on a 486DX4/100 with 16 MB RAM and 1.2 GB HD. Recently my PC started showing a DriveSpace warning screen after I turned the power on. The message reads: "The DriveSpace VXD and the DriveSpace real mode drive are mismatched. You may need to re-install them. Press any key to continue." I press any key and seem to have no further problems. How do I solve this error message?
- Q** I recently re-installed Win 95 and my HP 540 printer insists on ejecting a blank page before it prints normally. All the settings seem OK. I have tried the latest driver from the HP download service, but to no avail. When I first installed Win 95 I had a similar problem, but I have lost my notes. Is anyone aware of this problem, or is it something particular to my PC?
- Q** I use Internet Explorer and Netscape navigator under Win 95. If mail is waiting, both programs cause the system to report an illegal operation if I try to access mail.
- Q** I use Microsoft's CleanReg to fix registry problems and this seems to work. Has anyone had any problems with it? □

Symbolically speaking: Templates and symbols

A TIP FOR WORD v6 USERS

Jan Harkin



When I bought my first computer I had it all to myself. Heaven. Then the ankle-biters grew up and became computer literate. They've been leaving little surprises for me ever since.

This morning I started typing a document, pressed Alt+W to change to another and suddenly a Greek letter appeared. Alt+T produced another. I could still use the mouse to open the Tools menu but my favourite shortcut keys had gone haywire.

My daughter had discovered the easy way to insert symbols and special characters in her engineering reports using the Insert menu in Word for Windows v.6 (W4Wv.6).

If you need to use symbols or special characters in documents you can assign shortcut keys to them in W4Wv.6. But you need to take care not to choose a combination that's already in use.

So how is this done?

First, click on the *Insert* menu in the top tool bar. Choose *Symbol* from the drop-down menu. Click on *Symbol* if it is not already highlighted.

The Symbols table contains the letters of the Greek alphabet and most other common mathematical symbols, as well as arrows, playing card symbols and many more.

If you click on *Special Characters* another table appears. This contains the special symbols for copyright (©), registered (®), and trademark (™), and a variety of others, including opening and closing quote marks in both single (') and double (") forms.

Let's say you want to assign a shortcut key to the infinity (∞) symbol which is often used in

formulae in statistics and various branches of maths and science.

The infinity sign is in the symbol table. So click on *Insert*, then *Symbol* if necessary. Then click on the infinity symbol to highlight it.

Click on the Shortcut Key button below the symbol table. This will open the *Customize* dialog box. The cursor will move to the *Press New Shortcut Key* section. Give your chosen symbol a shortcut key combination, for example, Alt+Y.

Below the box where you have typed your shortcut key combination the following message will appear, hopefully: Currently assigned to [unassigned]. This means the key combination is not currently in use. Click on *Assign* then *Close*, then close the symbol dialog box.

Whenever you want to use the infinity symbol in a document you simply have to type Alt+Y and it will appear.

What if you type in a shortcut combination and the following message appears?

Currently assigned to [symbol 120] or some other instruction

You will need to choose another key combination that is either currently unassigned or one you don't use. If you share your computer check with the other users before reassigning a key combination that is currently in use.

What happened to my original setup?

My daughter accidentally saved her new shortcut keys to the normal template. This is the document window that is automatically loaded in W4W. That was why everyone who used W4W was getting her symbols whenever they typed the shortcut key combinations she chose, whether they wanted them or not.

If you don't need to use the special symbols frequently, you can assign them to their own template and leave the normal template unchanged.

Like so

From the File menu choose *New*. In the New dialog box click *Template* and *OK*.

A new window will appear called *Microsoft Word—Template 1* or whatever number is applicable.

You can now make whatever changes you wish to the shortcut combinations just as we did for the infinity symbol. Your changes will only apply when you use this template. The normal document window will not be affected.

Save the template using the *Save As* command from the *File* menu. Give it a name you'll remember. I've saved my daughter's template as ENGSYMB1.

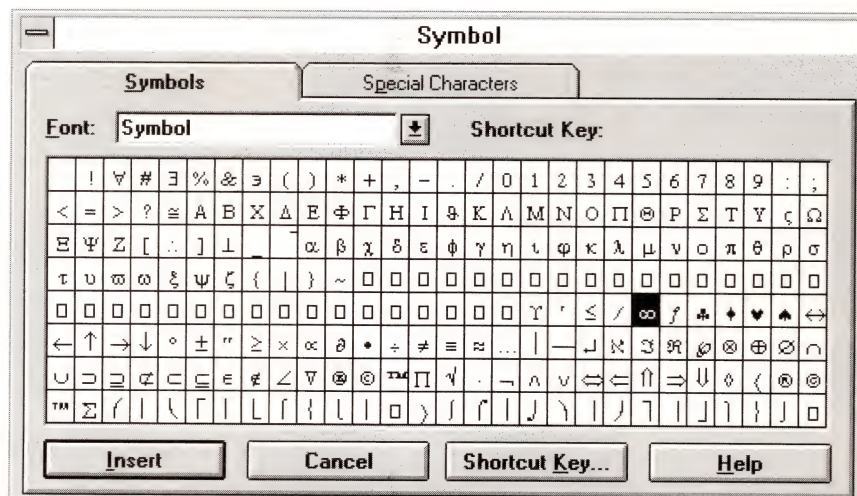
Templates are automatically given the .DOT extension. Now when my daughter needs to use that template, she will chose Open from the File menu and

ENGSYMB1.DOT from the Template directory in Winword. This will give her a new document where her chosen shortcuts will be recognised.

If she then saves her document using the *Save As* command her template will remain a blank document, ready to use again.

Now all I have to do is get rid of her shortcut selections from the Normal template and things will be back to normal.

Until next time. □



SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



a very useful tool for designers who mostly rely on ready-made shapes

Visio Technical is not so much a CAD (computer aided design) application as a 2D drag and drop drawing program. You create drawings by dragging shapes from a series of stencils then resizing, gluing and otherwise manipulating them. So-called shapes include walls, dimensions, scales, text and so on, so in theory you can create an entire drawing

by dragging and dropping shapes. Visio ships with 2000+ ready-made shapes, called SmartShapes, covering fields such as space planning, electrical, mechanical and electronic engineering, home and landscape planning and more. You can also create your own.

Visio has full Microsoft Office 97 compatibility, but you can elect to work with Lotus SmartSuite-compatible toolbars. There are two versions of Visio bundled in the one package; version 4.5 and 4.1, with 32- and 16-bit code respectively. Unless specified otherwise, this review covers both versions.

Main Features

SmartShapes, the building blocks of Visio, are programmable shapes with real-world behaviour. Stretch a bolt in any direction, for example, and it resizes proportionally; stretch the tail of an arrow, and only the tail resizes. You control the SmartShape by manipulating its control handles or programming its ShapeSheet. ShapeSheets define a shape's properties and behaviour, such as dimensions, angle and how it behaves when moved or double-clicked. You can link shape properties; by linking the colour of a bolt to its dimensions, for example, you can indicate whether the bolt is within tolerance.

Visio supports standard drawing features, including rotation, aligning and stacking

objects and snapping to grids, rulers, shapes and guide lines. You can join shapes in various ways, colour them and copy formats from one shape to another. Visio supports multiple layers and automatically assigns many shapes to specific layers; when you add the shape to the drawing, Visio adds the layer as well. You can control layer colour and whether layers will act as active snaps, be visible, printed or locked. You can also assign shapes to multiple layers.

There are some nifty time-saving tools. *Distribute Shapes* positions shapes an equal distance apart. *Array Shapes* creates duplicates then changes the copies when you alter the original. You can also duplicate shapes at specified offsets and lay out charts and network diagrams automatically.

Visio's drawing tools include *line*, *arc*, *freeform/spline*, *rectangle* and *ellipse*. A versatile Pencil creates both lines and arcs, depending on whether you move your mouse in a line or a curve. You can add text to any shape simply by selecting a shape and typing; the size, angle and location of text in relation to its parent shape is customisable. You can also create stand-alone text with columns and bulleted lists—although the process is quite clumsy. A spell checker and a global find and replace work for an entire drawing, page or selection. You

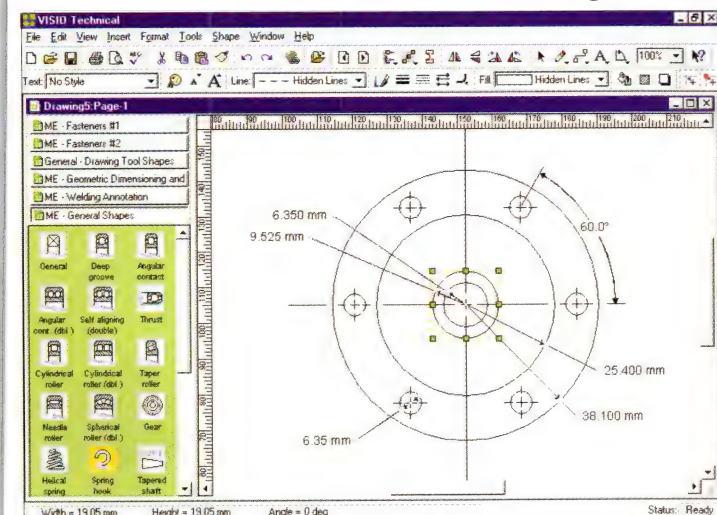


Figure 1. Visio's main screen displaying mechanical engineering SmartShapes in the stencil on the left

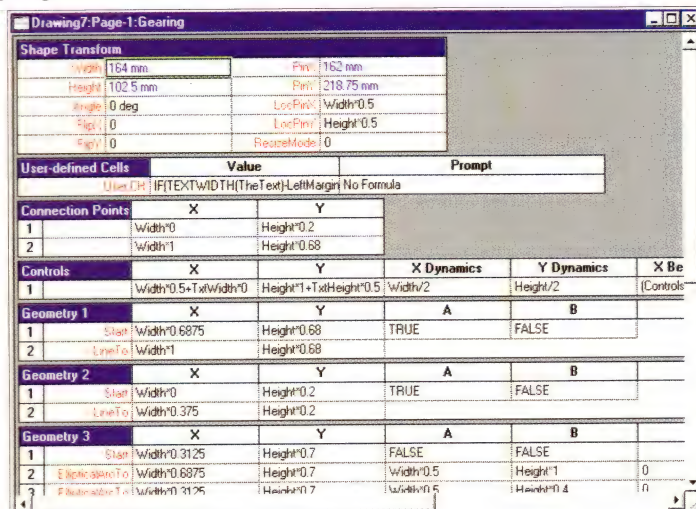


Figure 2. A ShapeSheet for a gear SmartShape

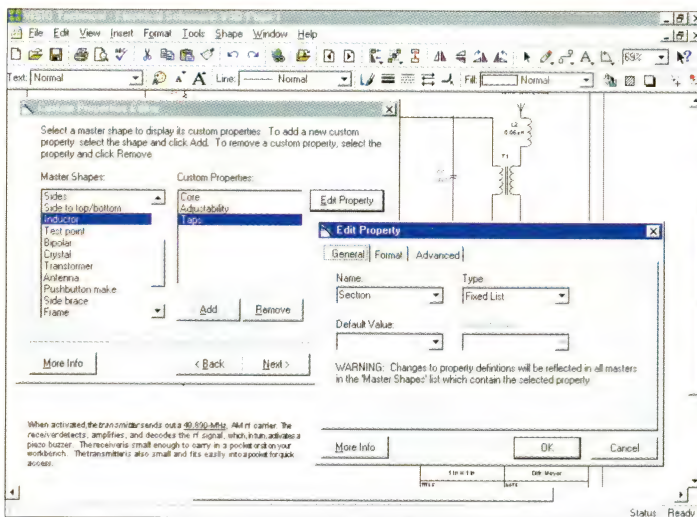


Figure 3. Creating or editing custom properties for SmartShapes

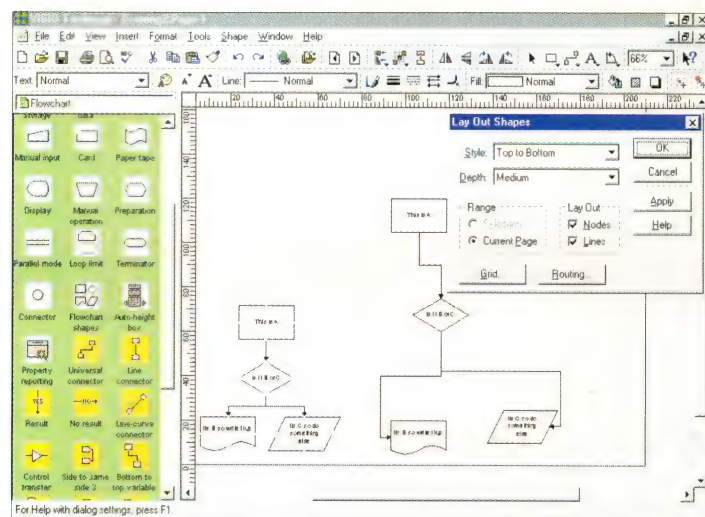


Figure 4. Laying out shapes automatically. New layout is on the left of the drawing page.

can also add data fields, such as page numbers, date/time or calculation results.

Visio Technical 4.5 includes Internet and ActiveX support, so you can add navigation links to shapes or pages and edit drawings within Internet Explorer. You can save pages in HTML format, and Visio will automatically add the appropriate navigation buttons to multiple pages. You can also export drawings to various Internet-ready formats, including JPEG, GIF and PNG.

Autocad support includes the ability to read and write DWG and DXF files, as well as a range of other formats. During import,

Visio automatically converts Autocad symbol libraries into SmartShapes. You can control the conversion to specify how Visio translates certain properties (eg. styles, fonts and scale). Autocad Release 13 files are imported as displayable meta-files, and you can append changes made in Visio to the original Autocad file.

You can create files with multiple pages, each having its own properties such as page size, scale and layers. Visio also supports large-scale printed output in ANSI A-E and ISO A4-A0 sizes, and will print a drawing to fit the size of your paper.

Creating Custom Solutions

Visio supports a range of tools which extend its functionality. Full OLE 2.0 compatibility, built-in VBA (Visual Basic for Applications) and support for Lotus Notes/FX and ODBC-compliant databases (including SQL and Oracle for Visio Technical 4.5) mean you can customise your Visio work environment, create add-on programs and share information with other applications. Alternatively, you can use stand-alone Visual Basic, C or C++.

To give you some idea of Visio's potential, you could

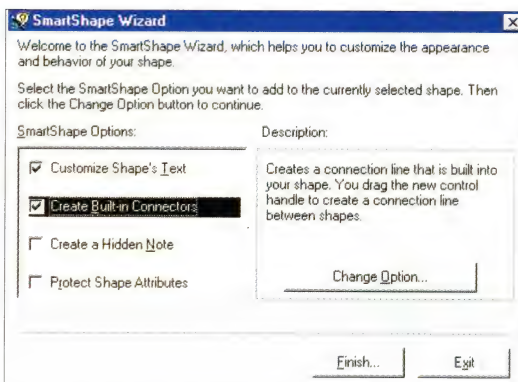


Figure 5. The SmartShape Wizard

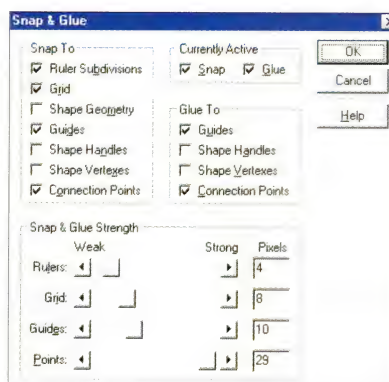


Figure 6. Setting snap and glue options

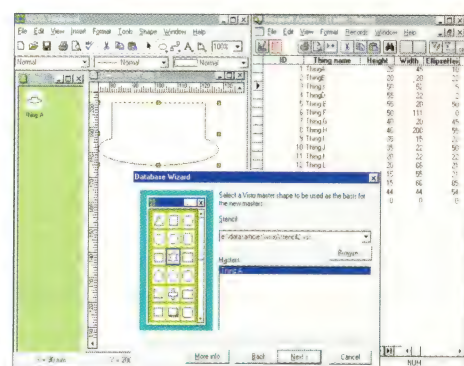


Figure 7. Generating new shapes using an Access database and the Database Wizard

Info Box

Minimum system requirements

Visio Technical 4.1

- 386 processor (486+ recommended)
- Windows 3.1
- 8 MB RAM (16 MB recommended)
- VGA graphics
- Mouse
- CD-ROM drive (3.5-inch disks available on request)
- 20-35 MB free hard disk space

Visio Technical 4.5

- 486 processor (Pentium recommended)
- Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51
- 12 MB RAM (16 MB recommended)
- VGA graphics
- Mouse
- CD-ROM drive (3.5-inch disks available on request)
- 20-55 MB free hard disk space

Availability and cost

Estimated street price \$499. Registered users of any previous Visio product can upgrade for \$249.

Distributed by Tech Pacific Australia Pty Ltd and Q*Soft (Australia) Pty.Ltd. For sales information contact Visio Hotline
Ph: 1800 551 976
Fax: 1800 559 366

- Maintain an asset register by linking an inventory database to a Visio space plan
- Update the inventory by adding or deleting shapes from the plan
- Generate new Visio bolt shapes from a bolt specification database
- Generate a material cutting list based upon drawing specifications
- Generate customer mailouts when specified events occur, e.g. a shape is updated.

Wizards make it easy to create organisation charts or project timelines from existing data.

Assessment

Visio is a drawing program with lots of potential. It lacks some standard features of purpose-built CAD packages, and many operations performed very simply by other programs, in Visio require VBA coding; for instance, macros, and custom menus and toolbars. On the other hand, Visio can save time and present a much shorter learning curve for users who rely mainly on pre-drawn shapes. Useful Wizards and programmable SmartShapes simplify many complex tasks, and of course programmers can use Visio to create powerful solutions for complex business procedures.

Certain tasks, such as creating complex shapes from scratch, are more difficult using Visio than they are with most CAD packages, partly because of an inflexible coordinate system. The menu structure is quite complex, with many commands buried four layers deep, and the status bar fails to display much of the information I expected to find there. While you can alter these last two features with some straightforward VBA programming, not all users will want to make the effort. The lack of a tutorial is a sad oversight, although there is plenty of other useful documentation.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Visio has the potential to be a very useful tool for designers who rely mostly on ready-made shapes, and for programmers who intend to exploit it as part of a customised business solution. □

Visit a SIG

You'll find a group of like-minded members to discuss your computing experiences and problems with.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) meet regularly (see the details on page 36 of this issue); contact a convenor to find out more about a SIG that could suit your special needs or interests.

SIGs exist for experienced and not-so-experienced members, there's always someone who knows more (or less) than you!

James Discovers Math

CHILDRENS' SOFTWARE

Bernadette Houghton



an entertaining, educational program

It's always great to encounter Australian software, especially when it's of such terrific quality and appreciated so much by the young ones, as James Discovers Math is by my 4-year-old.

A Broderbund program aimed at three- to six-year-olds, James introduces the rugrats to the basics of mathematics in a fun way. Judging by the reaction of young Patrick, it does a good job. A parent guide accompanying the program has a long list of skills that James helps to develop, ranging from number skills through to shape recognition, problem solving and telling time. There are ten activities—Patrick's favourites include

- Nursery Rhymes: where he sings along with the TV set as it plays *Mother Hubbard, Four Fat Sausages* or any of the other nine songs. Especially *Four Fat Sausages!* And *Four Fat Sausages* again!
- Fruit Shop: here he pops along to the fruit shop, counts the correct number of pears, bananas, oranges and apples, and stops to play with the shop cat.
- Magic Carpet: where he chooses a pattern then colours in the carpet or

spills paint all over it.

- Measurement: where he guesses the length of alligators, centipedes and other creatures.
- Picture Shapes: where he matches shapes to make a picture.

The other fun activities include the Clock Game, Storybook, Blocks (addition and subtraction), Boat Game (shapes) and Face Game.

Without question, James Discovers Math is an entertaining, educational program, well worthy of your child's attention. □

Info Box

James Discovers Math

Minimum system requirements

- 386DX-33 processor
- 4 MB RAM
- Windows 3.1
- Dos 5.0
- SVGA display with 256 colours
- Sound card
- Mouse
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive
- 4 MB free hard disk space

Availability and cost

Street price is around \$70. Also bundled as part of Broderbund's Learning Advantage Library, street price around \$130. Available from most major game and educational software stockists, including Myer, David Jones and Harvey Norman.

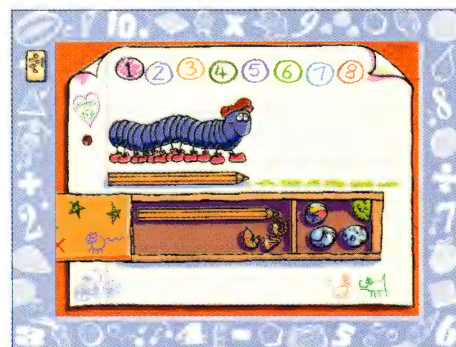


Figure 1. Measure the length of the centipede



Figure 2. Pick the fruit as per the shopping list

Fractal Design Dabbler 2

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bob Burt



**a delightfully
smooth-running
application**

The Fractal Design Corporation is a California-based company specialising in applications for graphics artists and designers. Its products include *Painter*, *Expression* and, of course, *Dabbler*. The programs have a common approach, namely, to provide artists and designers with the means for producing art work using a range of *natural-media strokes* in a manner similar to that used with traditional artist tools, such as paint brushes, pencils, crayons and pens. *Dabbler 2* provides realistic drawing tools and a range of paper textures. It features detailed online instruction in drawing and painting.

The package

Dabbler 2 is provided on CD-ROM and its program and major tools must be installed. You do have the choice of installing a Typical, Compact or Custom selection of components on your hard disk. The first option would be the normal choice, but it requires about 21 MB of free space.

The manual is slim and simply details the installation instructions, shows you how to use the online tutors and provides a guide to the images, stencils and textures available on the CD-ROM.

Info Box

Fractal Design Dabbler 2

Minimum system requirements

- 486DX or faster
- 8 MB RAM
- Windows 3.1+ or Windows 95
- 21 MB free hard disk space
- CD-ROM drive
- Mouse or drawing stylus
- Colour display

Price and availability

The review at time of writing appears to be a little ahead of local availability, but as a guide, version 1 has been retailing for between \$139 and \$125. However, as the retail price for version 2 in the USA and Canada is US\$69, I would expect the Australian price to be rather less than \$125

The program interface

The imagery of the "real" world is used in the opening screen of *Dabbler 2*. Thus the drawing area is described as the *sketch pad* and it is designed as a package of overlaid pages. Individual pages can be added or deleted as required. For tracing an image, you simply make an overlay page transparent and use a tool such as a pencil or a crayon to make your copy.

There is an alternative drawing area, however. *Dabbler 2* can be used to create animated sequences. For this purpose, you change the drawing area to a *Flipbook*, create individual frames and "flip" them within *Dabbler* to see the action.

The imagery extends to the drawing and painting tools, stencils and textures. All these are placed in drawers, which are initially displayed as closed. You open them to reveal the range of equipment on hand.

Finally, this real world approach extends to providing appropriate sounds for the opening and closing of drawers and the scratching of drawing implements over the surfaces of the sketch pad.

The equipment

The tools provide a couple of dozen drawing or painting implements, including text styles. You can use any of your TrueType fonts or one of the three font-based clipart libraries provided on the

CD-ROM. Many of the tools are provided in a range of sizes.

There are five paper texture libraries which include more than 120 different textures. Just as in the real world, the texture of the paper influences greatly the behaviour of the drawing or painting tools.

Stencils—in 23 libraries ranging from geometric shapes to people at work—provide an important aid to both drawing and painting.

Dabbler's tools for working with colour are in the *Colors Drawer*. You use the colour palettes to select your colours or select a colour from the *Color Wheel*.

The program also includes ten categories of photographs, from nature to places, science, sport and people. You can import other photographs if they are available in TIFF, Photoshop 2.5, Targa, RIFF, PICT, BMP or PCX formats.



Figure 1. The *Dabbler* interface

The Tutors

Obviously, you can only benefit from this wide range of drawing and painting tools and materials if you know how to use them. Fractal Design recognises this in the program's design, providing detailed instruction, aided by sound, animation and video. You run these teaching aids from the CD-ROM, each Tutor being a digital "book" that includes both text and graphics.

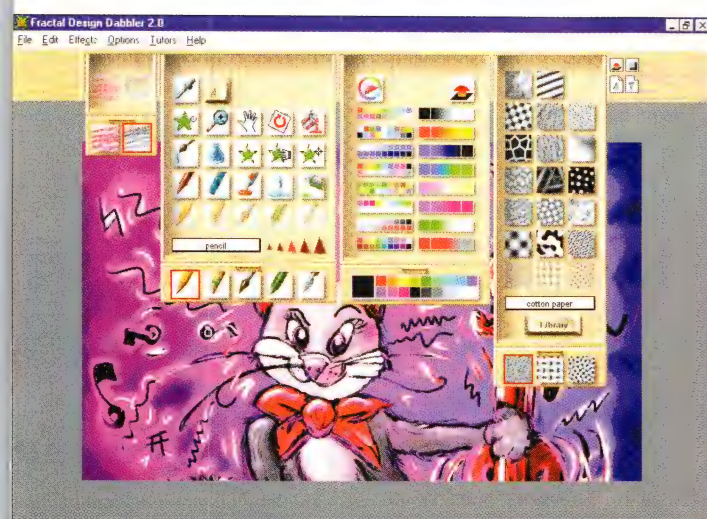


Figure 2. Displaying Dabbler tools, colour charts and textures

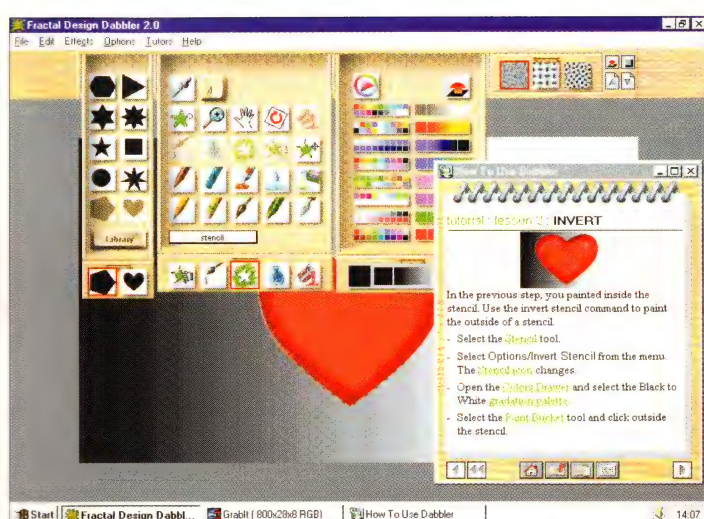


Figure 3. Using the Tutorial

The basic Tutor is the online manual, which explains all the features and provides useful exercises. Not unexpectedly, you should start with the *How to use the Tutors* section.

Additionally, there are two specialist Tutors. First, there is instruction on *Drawing Cartoons*, written by Bruce Blitz, which is fully detailed and provides masterly instruction on cartoon design. Building on this sequence, the second is entitled *Cartoon Animation*. This is written by Preston Blair, a renowned Disney animator and sets out to instruct you in all aspects of animation, ranging from developing a character to preparing the sequences.

A word of warning, however. The authors of these tutorials are experienced professionals, a fact that is made obvious by the quality of their presentations. They can teach you what to do, step by step, but to even begin to emulate them requires both patience and practice. You will not become an instant success unless you are already unusually talented!

Using the program

You will find little difficulty in quickly becoming familiar with the general operation of the program, particularly if you have taken the trouble to work through the online manual. There are many fascinating aspects to Dabbler. There is a large range of textures to be created from the interaction of tool and paper, and which you can make more attractive by the judicious use of colour. The preparation of animated sequences by using the flipbook is certainly rewarding, particularly because you can make completed pages temporarily transparent, so that you can see where the images you have already completed are placed, relative to any new image you are adding. You can save your animations as either QuickTime or Video for Windows movies, or print and assemble them into hand-held flipbooks.

You can manipulate photographs to produce artistic derivatives. You can use *cloning* to produce the effect of a hand-drawn picture of a photograph. A

selection of filters and effects can be applied to stencils or to the whole page—you can texturise, fade, produce a motion blur, introduce glass distortion, soften or sharpen images as required.

You can even use “sessions” to record the creation of artwork stroke by stroke. As you progress, you can add text to describe what you are doing.

Conclusion

This is a delightfully smooth-running application, richly endowed with a host of tools and textures and many features for modifying photographs. You can visit the Fractal Design Internet site at <http://unix.fractal.com> for tips on using Dabbler and download a very useful PDF file of all the Tutors. To read the file you will need an Adobe Acrobat Reader. Melb PC members can download a copy of the free reader, from our BBS. Others can download a copy from the Adobe web site at <http://www.adobe.com> or at any of the many web sites that offer Acrobat for download. □

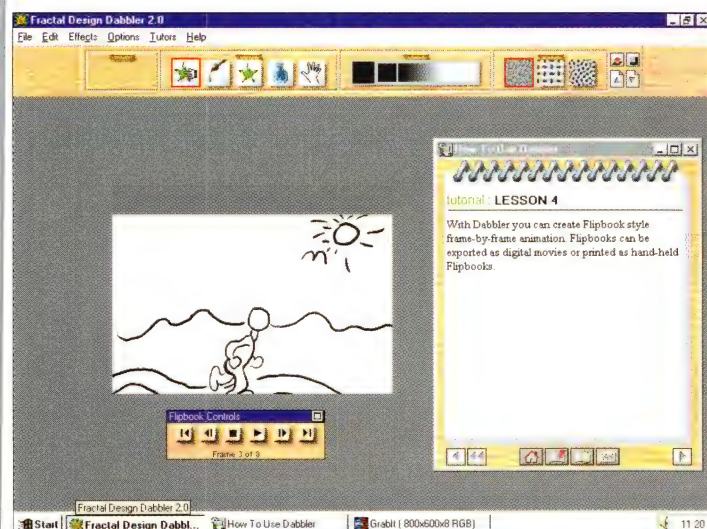


Figure 4. Creating Flipbook style animations

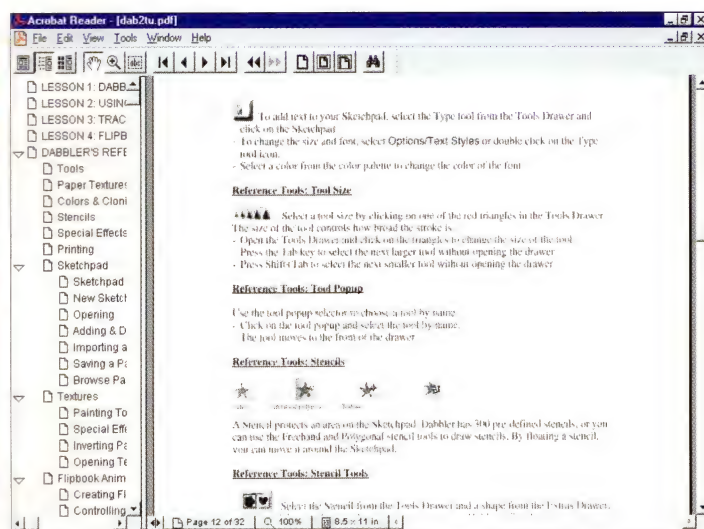


Figure 5. Reference Manual as a PDF file.

Pastel SOHO Accounting for Windows

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



**a viable
choice with
an established
upgrade path**

Pastel Software is aiming its new SOHO Accounting for Windows squarely at small businesses. Customised for Australian users, SOHO has pre-defined charts of accounts suitable for a range of organisations, including schools, retail businesses, clubs, service stations and medical practices. And with the year 2000—and potential data disaster—looming ever closer, it is reassuring to know that SOHO uses full four-digit years in its underlying tables.

Main Features

While it is certainly useful to understand the basic principles of double-entry accounting, SOHO offers several features to shield you from much of this nitty-gritty and make it easier to navigate, including

- System Navigator, a graphical display of SOHO's functions, so you can bypass the menu system
- Setup Assistant, which walks you through the process of creating a fully working company with a complete set of accounts
- Transaction Assistant, which leads you step-by-step through the process of creating general journal and cashbook entries
- Input screens that look like their paper equivalents e.g. invoices and cheques
- Data Remote, VCR-like navigation controls.

If you don't need your hand held, you

can bypass the assistants and enter data directly into tables.

Like most accounting systems, SOHO offers a general ledger as well as customer, supplier and inventory journals. You can establish as many as 999 main general ledger accounts, with 999 sub-accounts for each main account. With the drill-down screen you can zoom quickly to underlying records from high level accounts.

SOHO supports multiple companies (in separate files), budgeting and up to three bank accounts. By default, it uses batch processing, with new records placed in a temporary file until merged with the ledgers. Until this time, you can easily make changes; after merging, any amendments require adjusting journal entries or credit notes. SOHO uses separate batches for different transaction types (e.g. sales, purchases) and different periods, and requires that each batch be merged with the ledgers individually. You can, however, choose to use online processing, where ledgers update immediately.

You establish control accounts for sales, purchases and inventory at the initial account setup (or have the Setup Assistant create them for you). SOHO allocates the appropriate debit or credit to these accounts whenever the ledger updates. On most transactions you can override the default control account. You can post transactions to previous periods

at any time; there is no monthly close-off. However, you do need to invoke a year-end process to prepare the ledgers for a new financial year.

Debtors and creditors

SOHO offers most basic accounts receivable and accounts payable functions, including credit notes, sales tax, categorisation of sales (e.g. by salesperson or area), recurring transactions, reconciliations and so on. There is no provision for quotations or pending invoices, though. The graphical input screens are easy to use, and you can add new records to the master lists (customers, suppliers, inventory) on the fly. Invoices can hold as many lines of description as space permits. While SOHO restricts you to the standard credit terms of current/30/60/90 days, it will alert you whenever sales or purchases exceed

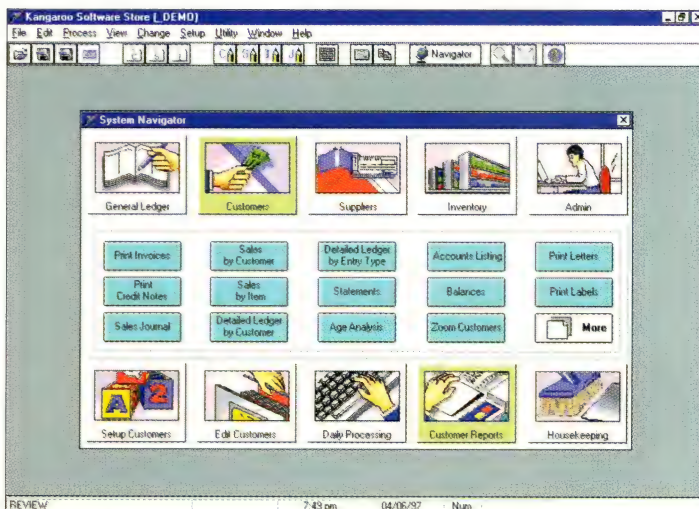


Figure 1. SOHO's main screen, with the System Navigator

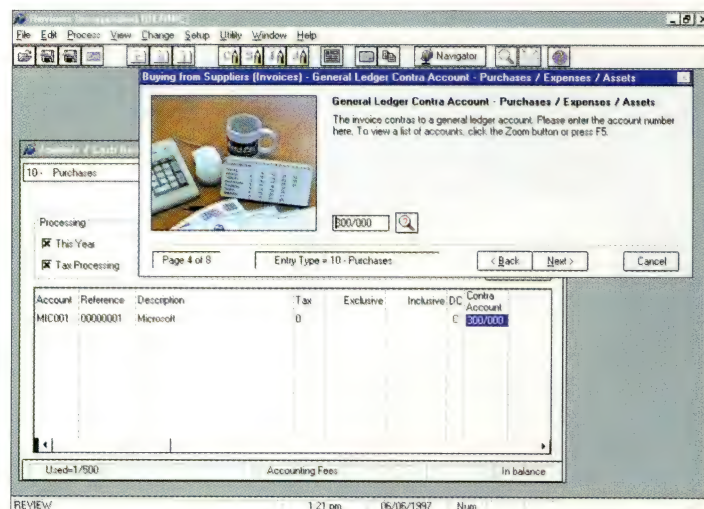


Figure 2. Using the Transaction Assistant to record purchases

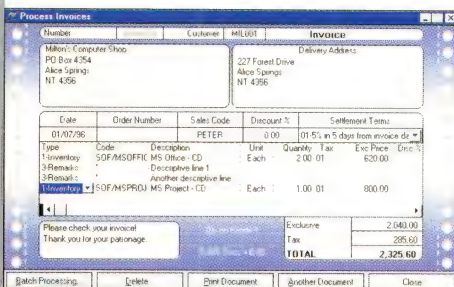


Figure 3. Processing supplier invoices. The customer invoice screen is similar.

credit limits. It will also warn you if there is insufficient stock on hand to fulfil an order; however, you'll have to track any backorders manually as SOHO lacks this capability.

You can process debtor and creditor payments on either an open item or balance forward basis (where payments are applied to specific invoices or to the outstanding balance). You can also switch back and forth from one method to another.

Inventory

SOHO's inventory system requires that you allocate individual inventory items to groups, with up to 999 groups possible, and an unlimited number of items per group. Each group has a corresponding set of general ledger accounts, but if you don't need this level of detail, you can simply allocate all items to a single group. You can also use the inventory system for services, which means you can perform the same analyses on services as on products (e.g. monthly fluctuations, gross profit).

SOHO uses the average cost method to cost individual inventory items, and summarises movement for each item on a monthly basis. You can specify minimum and maximum re-order levels, and SOHO will report what you need to re-order and from which supplier. You can also globally adjust selling prices.

Reporting

SOHO has 40-odd reports, including ageing, sales analyses, transactions and inventory, as well as a range of graphs. While you can specify the query set and change the names of financial categories (e.g. Fixed Assets, Retained Income), you

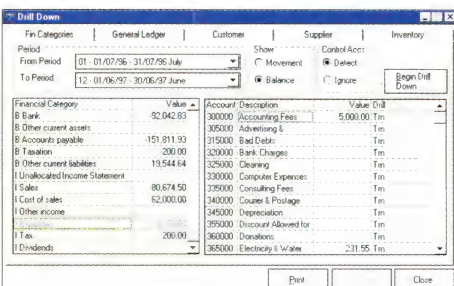


Figure 6. Drilling down through the accounts

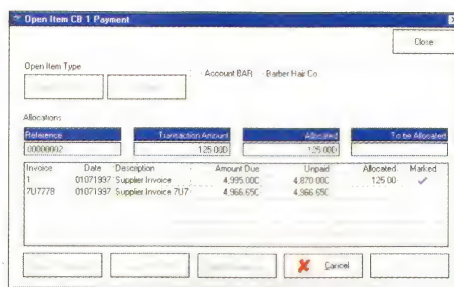


Figure 4. Allocating payments towards invoices

can't otherwise customise reports. You can apply simple formatting to graphs, though (e.g. background colour, graph type), and export data to external programs for further analysis.

Using the Forms Designer, you can customise SOHO's standard documents—invoices, credit notes, statements, labels and so on. Lack of time and an ominous *PC Update* deadline precluded me from looking at this in detail. However, you can choose which fields to display, add graphics and bar codes, and otherwise arrange objects to your liking.

Assessment

SOHO lacks some standard ease-of-use features common to other packages, and its interface is sometimes confusing and often inflexible. For example, sometimes you can tab out of a field to invoke look-up tables, but other times you must specifically press F5. Sometimes you can use the Data Remote for navigation, other times you can't. You can't insert new lines in the middle of an invoice, and there is no quick fill, where you start typing something and the rest of the line completes automatically.

Batch processing can become quite confusing, with batches requiring separate update. If you leave a batch open, there are continuous and intrusive warning messages. SOHO uses your existing DOS or Windows backup system, which has the potential to cause problems. On my own machine, for example, SOHO couldn't find my Windows 95 backup program (yes, it was there). Without a straightforward backup process, there is a real risk that backups won't be done and data may be irretrievably lost.

Setting up SOHO is fast and easy—five

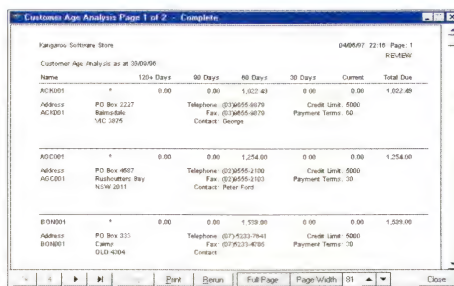


Figure 7. Reporting with SOHO

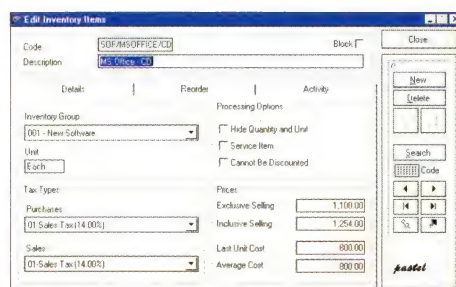


Figure 5. Creating inventory items

minutes or so if you use any of the pre-defined charts of accounts. SOHO also succeeds fairly well in sheltering you from a maze of debits and credits. Even so, there are times when you really do need to know if an amount should be a debit or a credit (e.g. while entering initial account balances). SOHO makes this easier by using defaults in the appropriate field. The Transaction Assistant is an excellent way for novices to learn how to use the package, and the graphical input screens are straightforward and easy to use.

If your accounting needs are simple, SOHO presents a viable choice with an established upgrade path in Pastel Partner V4 for Windows—just make sure you have an effective backup routine. □

Info Box

Pastel SOHO Accounting for Windows

Minimum system requirements

- 386DX
- Windows 3.1
- 4 MB RAM (8 MB recommended)
- 16-colour display (256 colours recommended)
- 15 MB free hard disk space (plus space for data files).

Availability and Cost

For further information contact Kevin Lief, Pastel Software (Aust) Pty Ltd
 Ph: (02) 9957 4010
 Fax: (02) 9929 7198
 e-mail klief@ozemail.com.au
 RRP \$199; \$349 with Pastel Payroll for 20 employees.

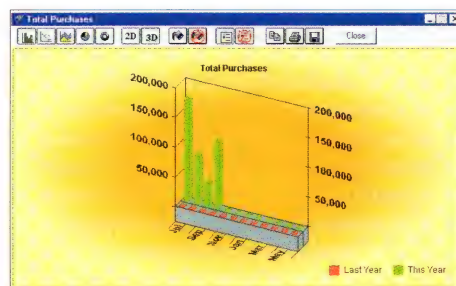


Figure 8. Creating graphs with SOHO

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



With a name like First Aid, I probably don't even need to mention that CyberMedia's First Aid 97 aims to diagnose and solve your computer problems. But it does much more than that. As well as improving performance, it actually tries to prevent problems and warn you about those it can't prevent. And if it can't solve a problem, it refers you to local technical support who—hopefully—can.

First Aid uses a "control panel" interface that is easy to navigate. Most features are directly accessible from this panel.

Windows Guardian

The Windows Guardian sits unobtrusively in your system tray, keeping an eye out for situations that threaten your PC's operations (Figure 1). Guardian will

- Intercept system crashes just before they occur, giving you a chance to save your work (Figure 2)
- Reactivate applications that have stopped responding so, again, you can save your work
- Track changes to system files and other nominated files so you can restore old versions if needed
- Give you advance warning of hard disk problems so you can prepare for a system failure by backing up your hard disk and so on

Info Box

First Aid 97

Minimum system requirements

- 386 processor
- 8 MB RAM
- Windows 95
- 256-colour VGA
- 17 MB free hard disk space

Availability and cost

Expected retail price \$69.95, Deluxe version \$89.95. Upgrades are available from previous versions of First Aid. Contact CyberMedia's Sales Hotline Ph: 1800 621 399

- Detect when your computer is running low on memory and free disk space
- Warn you when applications have missing components.

Guardian uses 2.7 MB of memory, plus another 358 KB if you have crash protection enabled.

Check-Up

Check-Up makes sure your hardware and software is in good working order (Figures 3 and 4). It looks for missing program components, file allocation errors, devices working incorrectly, hardware conflicts and so on, and also suggests ways to improve system performance. To correct errors, you can choose to

- AutoFix, where First Aid corrects the errors without further user intervention
- Manual Fix, where First Aid tells you step-by-step how to fix them yourself
- Ignore the error in future
- Report the problem for later action.

On its maiden run through my system, First Aid found a heart-stoppingly long list of problems, ranging from missing files, a CD-ROM not working properly (I'd installed it twice) and file allocation errors. It also reported that it didn't support my (nonexistent) MPEG card and that my printer and modem were functioning incorrectly. It seems that unless devices attached to your system (or which Check-Up thinks should be attached) are actually present and switched on, Check-Up is likely to report errors with them. Check-Up also reported a lengthy list of missing application files usually stored on CD. However, it was

easy enough to tell Check-Up (albeit, file by file, which took a while) to ignore these "errors" in future. You may also find that each time you run Check-Up, new errors are reported, since some errors mask others.

Advisor

If Check-Up's AutoFix and Manual Fix options don't resolve a problem, you can use Advisor to search for a solution. Click on a graphic of the device you're having a problem with, then choose the scenario matching your problem (Figures 5 and 7). Advisor searches its knowledge base, and may ask you a few questions before coming up with a solution. If no solution is forthcoming, you can use First Aid's Web Searcher (click the globe in Figure 5) as a front-end to search the Internet (Figure 8).

If you don't find a solution to your problem on the Internet, the *Tech Support Directory* (the yellow book in Figure 5) has a comprehensive listing of Australian technical support service contacts, including Melb PC. If you have an Internet connection, clicking a hyper-text link in the Directory opens your browser and takes you directly to a vendor's web site.

Advisor's knowledge base doesn't have a solution for every problem. I tried it out on some real-life problems I've encountered and solved. Advisor performed well on about half of them, but had room for improvement on others, including improving the speed of my modem, printing complex graphics and getting my CD-ROM to work in DOS mode.

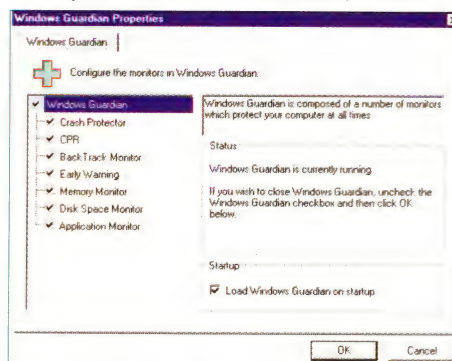


Figure 1. Windows Guardian monitors

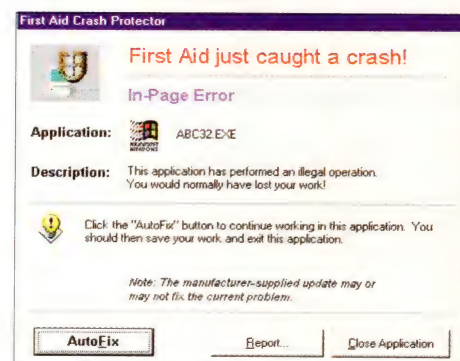


Figure 2. First Aid intercepting a crash

The Specialists

Check-Up is usually enough to keep your computer in reasonable condition, but First Aid offers Specialists for more advanced troubleshooting

• Applications Specialist. As well as verifying that all parts of a program are present and correct, the Applications Specialist enables you to delete or archive unwanted components (Figure 6). So far I've freed up 45 MB by getting rid of tutorials, cue cards, readme files and various program add-ons such as Microsoft WordArt. You may need to run Check-Up again after using this feature, as the Specialist doesn't remove all references to a "trimmed" program, e.g. in WIN.INI.

First Aid can correct application problems whether or not its knowledge base includes information about the application. However, for those it knows about, it can also identify file structure problems and corrupted Registry data.

- Multimedia Specialist checks speakers, sound and video cards and CD-ROMs and performs interactive tests.
- Online/Network Specialist ensures that your online and Internet connections are working effectively and checks modem hardware and network settings.
- System Specialist checks—among other things—the Registry, system files, shortcuts, file associations, hard disk fragmentation, as well as optimal performance settings and printer functionality.

Other features

First Aid logs all actions unless you specify otherwise, and you can undo almost any action recorded in the log. You can keep First Aid and its knowledge base up-to-date by using the Update button to connect to CyberMedia's web site.

First Aid's disaster prevention features

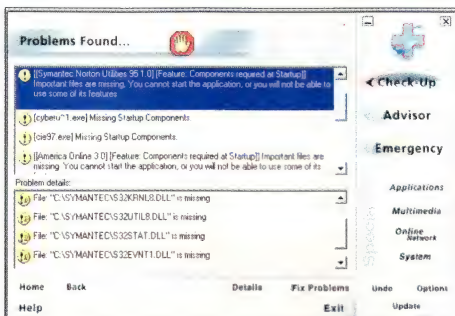


Figure 3. Problem finding by Check-Up

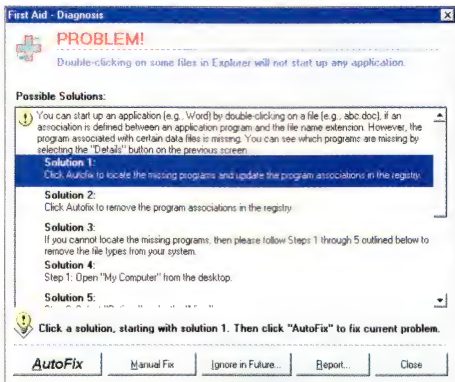


Figure 4. Solving problems found by Check-Up

include creating a startup disk and using Microsoft Backup to back up your data. The startup disk will only take you as far as the DOS prompt, so if you need to be able to access your CD-ROM or network, you'll have to copy these drivers across manually. Backtrack (part of the Windows Guardian) and an entry point into Microsoft Backup help you recover from a disaster. A little niggle here—using First Aid, I can't use my preferred alternative to Microsoft Backup (or Scandisk).

The Deluxe version of First Aid includes a useful hard copy of the Tech Support Directory, as well as 2 CD tutorials: CRT Multimedia's EasyTutor Learn Windows 95 and EasyTutor Get Connected—Internet.



Figure 5. Advisor's main screen

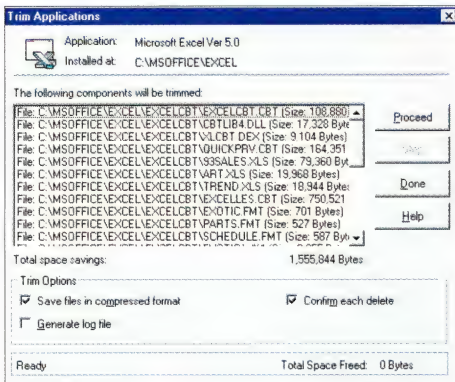


Figure 6. Trimming Excel's tutorial with the Application Specialist

Assessment

First Aid is a useful program that could save you from hours of waiting on hold to technical support. The application trim feature is great, the AutoFix saves hassle and First Aid does its utmost to ensure you know the next approach to take to solve your problem. I found First Aid very easy to use, and I'm sure that most computer novices will agree. It isn't a replacement for Norton Utilities, but is a definitely useful supplement. Don't expect it to diagnose or prevent every possible problem, but you can certainly rest a little bit easier with First Aid keeping its eye on things.

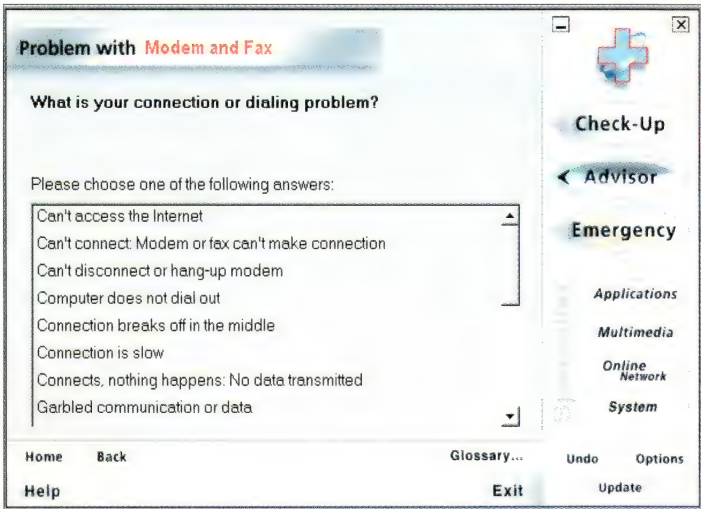


Figure 7. Selecting a problem scenario with the Advisor

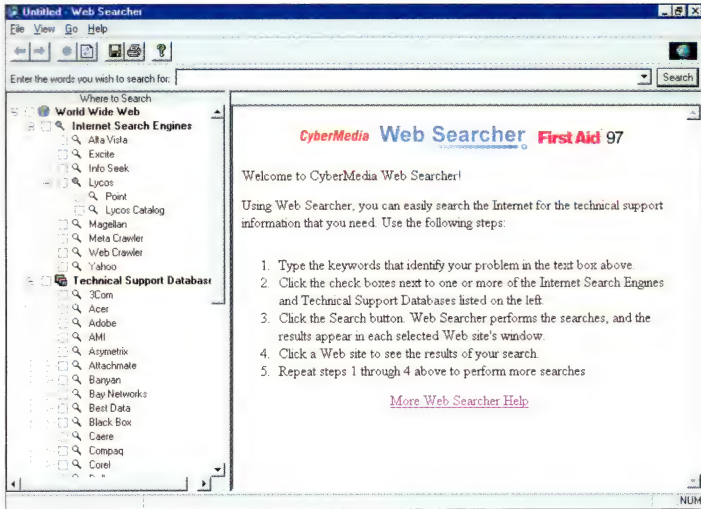


Figure 8. Using the Web Searcher to resolve problems

Project KickStart v.1.5

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bob Burt



This aptly-named business application is a project organiser produced by Experience Software Inc (EIS). It helps you compile your project tasks and resources and provides additional information like project goals and possible impediments.

Using Project KickStart (PKS) you can

- Organise your project into descriptive phases, tasks and sub-tasks
- Assign personnel to your task list
- Set goals, determine resource requirements, relate to earlier projects and identify obstacles
- Store notes on any phase of the design
- Print reports
- Transfer project information to MS Project.

The last item should give you a clue to the range and limitation of the application. PKS is not a scheduler like MS Project or Time Line. That is, it is not designed to provide linked tasks or time schedules that include details such as allowances for holidays, nor are there any critical path diagrams or Gantt charts to illustrate a project. You can, of course, simply add the time required for each phase and task within the project and this may be all you would need for a relatively simple design.

What PKS does provide is a well-designed front end that overcomes difficulties you might encounter in creating task lists in the scheduler.

The package

PKS comes on a single 3.5-inch diskette and is installed under Windows in the usual manner. A compact 68-page manual accompanies the program. This is clearly written and well illustrated. In addition to the "how-to" sections which relate to using the actual program, it includes a very useful Addendum on the design and preparation of tactical, strategic and operations plans and how to "brainstorm" them.

Using the program

Navigating PKS is very straightforward. The much overused term "intuitive" can truly be applied to this program, assuming the user is reasonably familiar with the Windows interface.

The expected menu bar is present. It is not overburdened, using the standard *File, Edit, View* and *Help* menus only. Below this is the button bar, giving alternatives to the File menu entries—*New, Open, Save* and *Print* and adding some specials—*Delete Row* and *New Row* to aid in editing and *Go to Web Site* to access the EIS Web page, <http://www.experienceware.com>.

The step bar is a vertical array of eight large buttons, enabling logical and orderly development of the project

- Name—name your project
- Phases—identify your project's main phases

a strikingly

well-structured

program...very

simple to use

- Goals—set the goals and related tasks
- Similar—compare with earlier projects
- People—identify who provides resources
- Obstacle—anticipate obstacles
- Assign—assign personnel to each task
- Tasks—review information and revise if necessary.

As you activate each button, you can read a brief instruction on what to do in that step. The instructions appear in an

Info Box

Project KickStart v1.5

Minimum system requirements

- A 386 with at least 4 MB RAM
- 3.5-inch drive
- 1.6 MB free hard disk space
- Windows 3.1+/NT/95
- A mouse or other pointing device

Availability and cost

Order from:

Step Up Systems, 191 Bridge Road, Richmond, VIC 3121

Ph: (03) 9427 6168

Fax: (03) 9428 8505

e-mail: sales@stepup.com.au

RRP: \$169

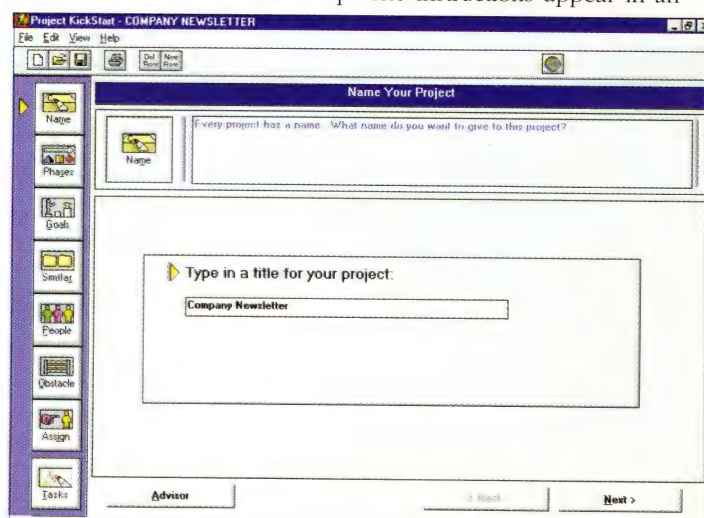


Figure 1. Giving your new project a name

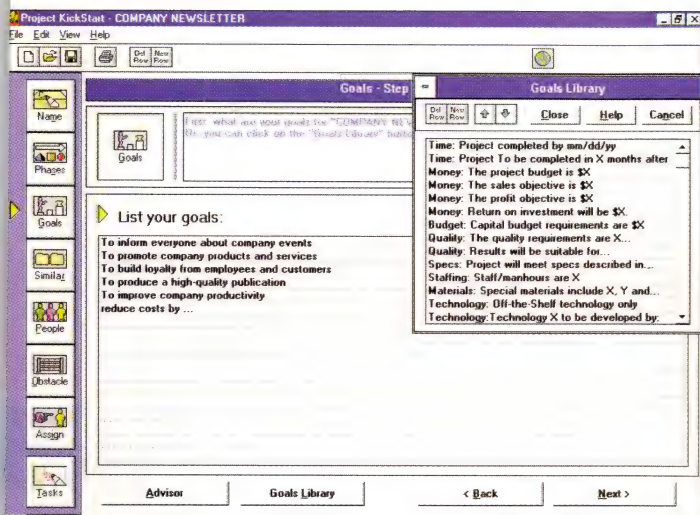


Figure 2. Setting goals (Goals Library accessible)

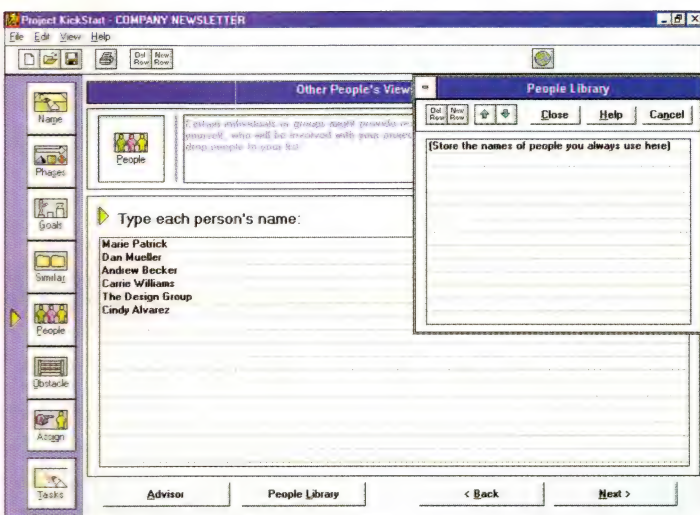


Figure 3. Assigning people to phases or tasks (People Library available)

elongated window immediately above the project information in the centre section of the screen. If you need further help, though, you simply press the *Advisor* button at the bottom of the screen to display context-sensitive information from the Help file.

To furnish you with ideas, four of the steps are equipped with a library, which you call up with the Library button that appears, when available, to the right of the Advisor button. Thus there are libraries available for the Phases, Goals, People and Obstacles steps. Initially you draw upon the suggestions already incorporated in each library, but you can steadily improve this resource by adding your own items as your own experience develops.

Most of the steps buttons have two or three further steps within them. This is clearly indicated, when it occurs, in the title line of the instruction window.

You can move back or forward in these sequences quickly by using the Back and Next buttons to the right of the Library (or Advisor) button.

When you have completed the Tasks section, you can link your project to any of the following programs, provided you have it on your computer

- MS Project—to schedule and track
- SureTrak Project Manager—to schedule and track
- Time Line—to schedule and track
- Milestones, Etc.—to schedule and track
- MS Word—to edit and format text
- MS Excel—to perform calculations.

Given all the guidance that is provided, much of it automatic, there is little doubt that most new users would find PKS a pleasure to use. You can modify any of the steps easily, no matter what stage of completion you have reached and the program lends itself to being used for "brainstorming" sessions to produce alternative models.

You will need to establish your own guidelines about what you will regard as a phase and what you consider to be a task within that phase. Perhaps what you originally set down as a task might simply finish up as a note! You would

certainly need to have an understanding of the differences between a goal and a phase.

Sample projects

There are six detailed examples of projects provided with PKS. These clearly illustrate how wide a field can be usefully encompassed by this program

- Organise a company newsletter
- Prepare for an information analysis seminar
- Plan a company www page for the Internet
- Develop a mechanical device from concept to production
- Prepare for a marathon race
- Design a deployment process for Windows 95.

Conclusion

PKS is a strikingly well-structured program for the organisation of projects. It is very simple to use and ensures that the user applies an orderly approach to the preparation of each project outline. □

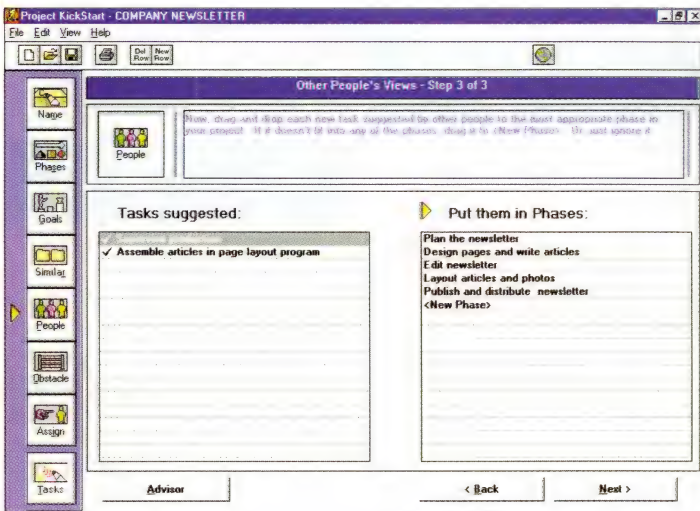


Figure 4. Adding new tasks and assigning them to phases

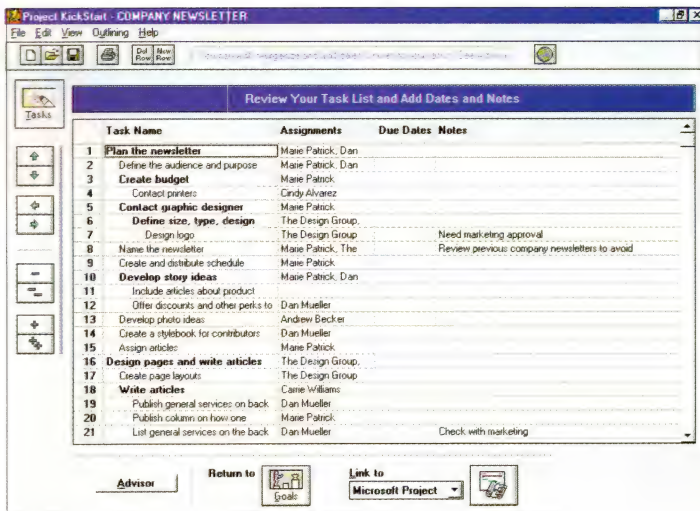


Figure 5. Review of task list

Training courses

JULY - AUGUST

Paul Palcsek



Applications

Introduction to Access v2.0 \$102

Ray Azzopardi

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Thu 3, 10 Jul.

This course gets you started on the road to making use of the powerful features in Access. You'll learn how to create tables and queries. Students receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: Experience with Windows and a mouse.

Introduction Powerpoint \$45

Caroline Houston

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Tue 22 Jul.

This course will give you an introduction to Microsoft Powerpoint.

Prerequisites: Students must be familiar with Windows.

MS Publisher Introduction \$90

John Hulskamp

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 13, 20 Aug.

The course provides participants with an introduction to desktop publishing using MS Publisher, and an opportunity to produce a simple flyer and brochure targeted at the participants' interests.

Prerequisites: A familiarity with a word processing package such as MS Word, and Windows operation.

Quicken for small business: \$180

Viv Martin

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Jul.

Bookkeeping, record keeping, producing reports for accountants.

Prerequisites: Basic Windows experience assumed.

Starting Excel v5 \$177

10.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat/Sun 5/6 Jul.

Organise your facts and figures using Excel. You can use Excel as a simple database to keep track of assets or use it to keep track of your bank accounts. Excel has hundreds of uses. This course gives you a solid introduction to Microsoft Excel v5. Students receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: Experience with using a mouse and Windows.

Contacting us

You may contact Training with suggestions for training courses or other training-related matters by sending e-mail to training@melbpc.org.au

Using Excel to analyse data \$103

Ray Azzopardi

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Thu 31 Jul, 7 Aug.

This course covers functions, formulas, pivot tables, charts, trend analysis, data sorting, subtotaling, data grouping, filtering, exporting to a database, macro recording, non-workbook files. Students receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: Must have used Excel.

Word for Windows v6/7 long documents: \$73

Jill Renison

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Wed 16 Jul.

Do you have to manage long documents? Do you like to brainstorm? Use Word's inbuilt features to manage long documents, theses, novels, etc. Learn how to add section breaks, headers, footers, tables, indexes, page numbers, etc. Use Word's outlining feature to brainstorm ideas. Students will receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word Documents, and have experience using a mouse with Windows.

Communications

Using the Melb PC BBS \$45

Lynn Pollock

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 11 Jul.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 8 Aug.

A basic look at the Melb PC BBS with hints and tips on using all the various menu items. Also covers initial log ons and using the message areas.

Prerequisites: Must have logged onto the Melb PC BBS

Booking

To book a course, please use the order form on page 32 or, for credit card orders, phone or fax the office (numbers on page 3.)

Internet

Note: Internet courses are best done in the sequence shown—1 to 5; or 1, 2 or 3, 4 and 5.

1. What is the Internet? \$45

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 26 Jul.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 23 Aug.

An overview of the Melb PC Internet service. Live demonstrations of all the major programs that go to making up the Internet. Discussion of the Hardware items involved. General questions concerning Internet connections.

Prerequisites: None.

2. Using the Melb PC Internet service—Windows 3.1 \$90

Lynn Pollock

1.00 pm–4 pm, Sat/Sun 12/13 Jul.

1.00 pm–4 pm, Sat/Sun 9/10 Aug.

This is a basic course exclusively for Windows 3.1/3.11 users. Hands-on individual installation of Windows 3.x Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live connections to demonstrate all the major components. Covers all aspects of Internet connection. Basic discussion on broad range of Internet topics including netiquette, viruses and common connection problems. Suit people about to install basic Windows 3.x Internet software or novice users of the Internet.

Prerequisites: Must have a good working knowledge of Windows 3.1.

3. Using the Melb PC Internet service—Windows 95 \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat/Sun 12/13 Jul.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat/Sun 9/10 Aug.

This is a basic course exclusively for Win 95 users. Hands-on individual installation of Win 95 32-bit Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live connections to demonstrate all the major components. Covers all aspects of Internet connection. Basic discussion on broad range of Internet topics including netiquette, viruses and common connection problems. Suit people about to install Win 95 Internet software or novice users of the Internet who want to use the inbuilt Win 95 32-bit TCP/IP software.

Prerequisites: Must have a good working knowledge of Win 95.

4. Effectively using Web Browsers \$60

Lynn Pollock

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 26 Jul.

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 23 Aug.

Complete demonstration and explanation of all features and configurations in the latest versions of Netscape and MS Internet Explorer. Configuring new helper applications, managing bookmarks or favourites, and tips and tricks to maximise your browser usage. Discussion on various searching techniques for locating information on the Web and other browser-related issues.

Prerequisites: Must have attended basic Internet course or have a reasonable Internet understanding. This is an intermediate course.

5. More using Melb PC Internet service \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 27 Jul.

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 24 Aug.

Complete demonstration and explanation of e-mail (advanced packages) FTP, Archie, Gopher, Finger, Telnet, IRC Network, newsgroups and offline readers, list servers, session timers and more. In addition, connection problems are discussed as well as general tips and tricks to improve your connection time. A set of detailed instructions are discussed and practised, detailing how to upgrade or add to your Internet software without causing major problems or heartaches.

Prerequisites: Must have attended basic Internet course or have a reasonable Internet understanding. This is an intermediate course.

Beginners' HTML/Web page authoring \$90

Steven Goldate

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 17, 24 Jul.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 14, 21 Aug.

The course covers the principles of HTML (HyperText Markup Language) for writing Web pages for the Internet. Participants learn to write HTML using a text based and a WYSIWYG editor. Covers design aspects, "Do's" and "Don't's", image file formats, uploading files to a server, getting noticed, and more.

Prerequisites: Basic Windows experience assumed. Experience using a text editor preferred.

Operating Systems, Diagnostics, Hardware

Advanced Windows 95 \$45

Lynn Pollock

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Fri 25 Jul.

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Fri 22 Aug.

Complete hands-on examination of the advanced features found in the Win 95 operating system. Includes adding and configuring new hardware, multiple user configurations, Registry control and editing, advanced system maintenance, backing up essential files, communications and more!

Prerequisites: Attendees must have a good working knowledge of Win 95 and have obtained an understanding of the operating system's functions.

Specialist trainers required

We require additional specialist Trainers in the following subjects for classes commencing later this year.

- MS Excel
- MS Outlook 97

Wanted

Help from a Windows NT specialist to assist in configuring and streamlining the Training network, consisting of one NT server and 12 Win 95 PCs.

If you are interested and suitably experienced in one of these areas, please contact in the first instance lynn@melbpc.org.au or mail details to Lynn Pollock c/- the Office with your details.

Computer basics \$120

Mary Levens

6.30 pm-8.30 pm,
Tue 5, 12, 19 Jun, 26 Aug.

Take control of your computer with this hands-on guided discovery of dos-based computing. Covers terminology, basic dos commands, directory structure, file types, brief discussion of hardware and software. Knowledge of these topics is a prerequisite for other courses.

Prerequisites: No prior computing experience required. Students must have frequent access to a dos-based PC outside of class.

Hardware upgrade and repairs \$45

Tom Coleman

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Tue 29 Jul.

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Fri 15 Aug.

This course shows beginners how to upgrade their PCs, replace components. Troubleshooting hints are also given. **Prerequisites:** None. No electronic or mechanical experience required.

Visual Basic for Starters \$135

Gerard Schlosmacher

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Mon 4, 11, 18 Aug.

How to buy a computer \$10/\$60

Members: \$10. Non-members \$60 (includes first year's subscription.)

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Wed 23 Jul.

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Fri 29 Aug.

What a computer does, what the jargon means, buying advice, tips, no sales talk!

Prerequisites: None.

Introduction to networks \$90

Len Krois

9.00 am-4.00 pm, Sat 16 Aug.

This shows you how to connect two or more computers so that you can share computer resources.

Prerequisites: You must be familiar with Windows 3.x or Win 95.

Introduction to UNIX \$45

Len Krois

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Wed 30 Jul.

UNIX/UNIX basics for people that want a basic feel for the open systems environment. UNIX is a popular shareware version of UNIX that runs on IBM compatible PCs. The session includes: logging onto a UNIX system, finding your way around, manipulating files, viewing and editing text files, using the on-line text manual.

Prerequisites: Command line computing knowledge preferred.

Notes

Courses are held at the group's premises, usually in the training room. Some courses are held in the sig room, so check when you arrive.

For more details see the BBS or the group's Web pages.

Enrolments usually close a week before the course starting date.

The address is:

2nd Floor, 66 Albert Road
South Melbourne VIC 3205.

There is normally plenty of nearby parking in the evenings or at weekends.

Overview of Windows 95 \$45

Barry Fredrickson

9.00 am-12 noon, Sun 20 Jul.

9.00 am-12 noon, Sat 30 Aug.

Take control of your computer with this hands-on guided discovery of Win 95-based computing. Covers terminology, directory structure, file types. Knowledge of these topics is prerequisite for other courses.

Prerequisites: No prior computing experience required.

The Basics of Programming: \$135

Gerard Schlosmacher

6.30 pm-9.30 pm, Tue 1, 8, 15 Jul

Provides students with an insight to what programming is all about, the concepts of programming and computer languages. Students will also review a Visual Basic program in detail and test it. This is a prerequisite for "Visual Basic for Starters."

Prerequisites: Familiarity with Windows, preferably Windows 95, including mouse and keyboard skills. A basic general knowledge of computers.

Upgrade to Windows 95 \$139.50

Len Krois

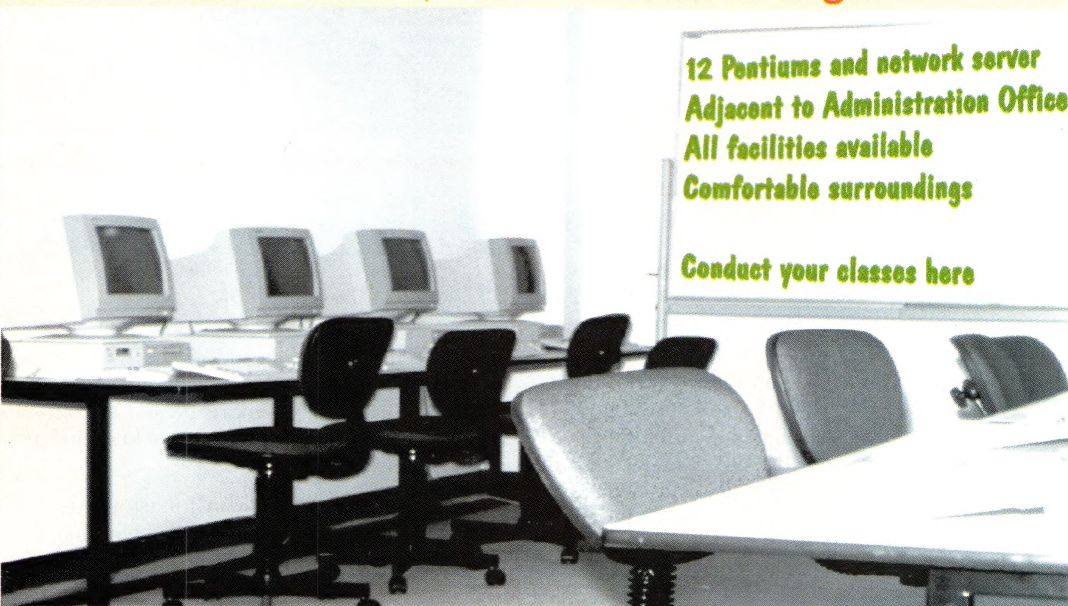
9.00 am-5.30 pm, Sat 19 Jul.

This course is for Windows v3.1/v3.11 users moving to Win 95. A thorough overview of all of the new features you are getting with Win 95 so you can quickly convert your Windows 3.1 skills to the new Win 95 arena.

Prerequisites: You should be familiar with Windows v3.1 to the level of the Starting Windows v3.1 course

Need a Training Venue?

The Melbourne PC User Group Training Centre is available for rental, on a casual or regular basis.



For further
information contact:

Melbourne
PC User Group
Administration Office
2nd Floor
66 Albert Road
South Melbourne
VIC 3205
Ph: (03) 9699 6222
Fax: (03) 9699 6499

Peter's PC Update Puzzle

WIN A COREL CD-ROM

Peter Smith



These puzzles are designed to be solved without using a computer—if a bird-brain can write them, another bird-brain can solve them!

The main problem is that bird-brains make mistakes and last month's puzzle is a good example. A "typo" made it impossible to solve—so here it is again, with a bit of luck you will be able to solve it this time!

Several sharp-eyed readers also pointed out that the solution in last month's issue also contained an error—the total for row D is 38, not 33.

Solve the puzzle (you may use plain paper or a photocopy—you do not need to mutilate your *PC Update*) and send your entry to

Peter's PC Update Puzzle
July
PO Box 14
Ringwood VIC 3134

to arrive by Thursday 31 July.

We'll publish the solutions and the winner in the September *PC Update*.

No, entries cannot be accepted by fax or e-mail; good old-fashioned snail-mail gives everyone an equal opportunity and won't clog up my e-mail or fax! Also please don't send entries to the Melb PC office—they are busy enough.

Prize

This month the prize is a copy of the Corel All Movie Guide, which was reviewed by Bob Burt in the November 1995 issue of *PC Update*.

Four of Everything

Each of the digits 1 – 9 occurs four times in the central part of the grid. The clues mention every time that a digit appears more than once in a column or row. No digit appears next to itself, horizontally or vertically. The numbers to the right and bottom of the grid are the sum of the cells to the left or above.

Across

- A. A pair of 3s, no 9s.
- B. A pair of 8s, a pair of 9s.
- C. A pair of 2s.

- D. No 7s.
- E. A pair of 7s.
- F. No 6s.

Down

- a. A pair of 4s.
- b. A pair of 1s, a pair of 7s.
- c. A pair of 5s.
- d. A pair of 7s.
- e. A pair of 2s.
- f. No 8s.

May's results

The winner was Zoe King from Vermont South.

Solution

Stephanie, orange, Sonia and Sylvia.
Sarah, white, Sabina and Sadie.
Shirley, yellow, Sheila and Sophie.
Sandra, red, Sally and Samantha.
Sharon, purple, Stella and Sybil.

Tips

I've been asked to describe how to solve these puzzles. I could lay it all out step-by-step but that would ruin the challenge, so instead here a few clues. It needs care and thought—with practice these can be done in 15 to 20 minutes, but the first few usually take a lot longer!

- First, work out what goes in the two empty yellow squares.
- Then, for each row and column, work out what must be present, what can't be present and what could be present, remembering that all the missing numbers are different.
- As you do this, you might find that one or more rows or columns "falls out." You could discover that, say, there are four 9s left, and only four rows or columns that could use 9s.
- This in turn eliminates some other possibilities, and so on.
- After a while you will have a set of six digits for each row and column.
- Then it is a matter of looking at what each cell could contain, remembering that adjacent cells must not contain the same digit.

Be very careful in all the steps, as one incorrect assumption will rebound all the way!

Answer grid

Four of Everything

	a	b	c	d	e	f	
A							32
B							
C							30
D							26
E							28
F							24
	33	25	36	37		27	



Prizes needed

We are coming to the end of the prizes that have been donated. If you or your company could donate one or more prizes, for our puzzle fans, we'd be happy to acknowledge you on this page.

Please contact either Stan Johnstone or Peter Smith (contact details on pages 2 and 3 of this magazine.)

MEMBER'S LETTER

Year 2000

Steve Buttery

I spend more time reading computer magazines than computing. In a magazine called *Archive* (vol.10.8, May 1997, pp 48-49) is the suggestion that to leave the latest model DOS box running Win 95, all night, on 31 December 1999 will cause the computer to set "an extra bit somewhere in CMOS RAM to say *post 2000*". Other machines, as recent as six months old, will display a 1980 date in the year 2000 AD. Current British model DOS boxes, apparently, cope with 2000 AD satisfactorily — if given the above treatment.

Another fix given for the latest machines, is to set the DATE and TIME commands (in DOS) to give the date (post 2000 AD ?).

Elsewhere, there is a warning that data can be lost by setting the date, ahead, to 2000 AD!

Editor's reply

Dear Steve,

The more I learn about the Year 2000 problem, the less I know! Your letter has convinced me that if nothing else, we should be very careful come New Year's eve 1999.

Carol Daniels



Cartoonist Rob Pickford's

"The Home-away-from-home Office"

PC Update advertisers index

Alex Electronics and Computer Services	22	OfficeNet	21
Bayside PC Services	41	Pagination Design Services	27
Bayside Solutions	17	Pastel Accounting Software	27
CD Design	22	Pollock Computer & Technical Services	43
CompScan	41	Solutions by Design	45
Computer Rebuilds	15	Charlie Sorel	15
Cybec	21	RMIT	37
EPS Electric Parts Supplies	15	Swap Meets —	
Future Domain	5	Malvern, Collingwood, Box Hill, Camberwell, Springvale	7
Intronics	43	TECS	OBC
JED Microprocessors	38	Ultimate Computing Technology	24
K.A. Barry & Associates	25	Utopia Systems	23
Modem Superstore	19	Vision Fix Software and Support	17
Netsys	10		

Acknowledgments

Melbourne PC User Group gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the following organisations

American Power Conversion for the supply of six uninterruptible power supplies for the Group's Communications Centre.

ACA Pacific for the donation of a Diamond Stealth Video card for *PC Update* production.

Computer Rebuilds for the supply of equipment for *PC Update* production and the group's communications centre.

Corel Corporation for copies of CorelDRAW and Corel VENTURA used in the production of *PC Update*.

Hewlett-Packard for a LaserJet 4M printer for administration and a Vectra PC, ScanJet scanner and LaserJet 5Si MX used in the production of *PC Update*.

Michaels Camera & Video for a Kodak DC20 Digital Camera.

Microsoft Australia for contributions and support over many years.

SONY Australia for the supply of equipment for *PC Update* production.

Symantec Australia for contributions and support over many years.

Monthly meeting
All members and guests welcome

Pharmacy College
381 Royal Parade
Parkville

6.00 pm
First Wednesday
each month except
January

An average of over 500 members and guests attend our monthly meetings, which provide an excellent forum to introduce and release new products to those who are both users and decision makers. Meetings are arranged around planned themes. Members or presenters who are able to assist or contribute are invited to contact the convener.

Stan Johnstone Meetings convener and administrator
Phone: (03) 9578 3091 BH
e-mail stanj@melbpc.org.au

2 July SOHO
(Small Office/Home Office)

Plus:

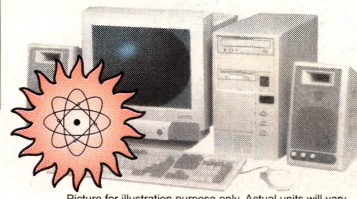
- The usual giveaways
- Random Access
- Shareware Library Sales
- Socialising
- Don't forget the Waffle SIG after the meeting.

Choosing a computer from TECS is as easy as 1,2,3!!!

1 year on-site warranty, delivery, setup.*
2 year parts, unlimited labour warranty.
3 year on-site warranty on Hundai monitor.

* - Limited to Melbourne metro areas only. Conditions apply.

Not exactly what you're looking for?
 We can custom build systems to your specifications! Call for a quote.



Picture for illustration purpose only. Actual units will vary.

Number 1: Ventura

- IBM 6x86 P200+ CPU
- 256K cache
- 16M EDO RAM
- 1.6G EIDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 2M ET6000 PCI video card
- 15" Goldstar NI LR monitor
- 16X CD-ROM drive
- 16-bit sound card
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Windows 95
- Vet antivirus software

16M RAM 1.6G HDD
16X CD-ROM DRIVE
\$1995

Number 2: Nexus MMX

- Intel Pentium-166MMX CPU
- 512K cache
- 32M EDO RAM
- 2.1G EIDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 2M Diamond Stealth 3D PCI video card
- 15" Hyundai NI LR monitor
- 16X CD-ROM drive
- Sound Blaster 16PnP
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Internal 33.6K fax/modem
- Windows 95
- Vet antivirus software

Intel MMX CPU
32M RAM
2.1G HDD
16X CD-ROM DRIVE
Fax/modem
\$2950

Number 3: Titan MMX

- Intel Pentium-166MMX CPU
- 32M EDO RAM
- 3.2G EIDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 2M Matrox Mystique PCI video card
- 15" Hyundai NI LR monitor
- 16X CD-ROM drive
- Sound Blaster 32PnP
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- Honeywell 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Netcomm internal 33.6K fax/modem
- Hewlett Packard DJ590C printer
- Windows 95
- Vet antivirus software
- Microsoft CD bundle

Intel MMX CPU
32M RAM
3.2G HDD
16X CD-ROM DRIVE
Fax/modem
Colour printer
\$3750

Viewmaster Notebooks

75MHz \$2885 **133MHz \$3075**

Model 3510

Features:

- Genuine Intel Pentium CPU
- 10.4" TFT active colour screen
- 8M RAM
- 1.1G HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 86 key keyboard
- 1M PCI graphics card
- Integrated 16-bit sound module
- Built-in MIC & stereo speakers
- Glide-pad pointing device
- NiMH battery

Options:

- Upgrade to 1.3Gb HDD \$100
- Upgrade to 16Mb \$149
- Internal 6X CD-ROM \$309
- Windows 95 \$140

2 year* return to base warranty!!
 * - 1 year on screen, battery, & accessories

Pentium Pro System

Specifications:

- Genuine Intel PentiumPro 200MHz CPU
- 32M of fast EDO RAM
- 2.1G mode 4 enhanced IDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 15" Goldstar 56i monitor
- 2M Hercules Dynamite 128
- 12X CD-ROM / SB16PnP / speakers
- MS mouse and pad
- Honeywell 104 keyboard
- ATX mini-tower case
- Microsoft NT4.0 Workstation

2 year parts and unlimited labour warranty!
 1 year on-site warranty, FREE delivery and setup!*

* - Limited to Melbourne metropolitan areas only. Conditions apply.

Budget Pentium Systems

120MHz \$1425 **150MHz \$1535** **166MHz \$1750**

Specifications:

- Genuine Intel Pentium CPU
- 16M of fast EDO RAM / 256K cache
- 1.6G mode 4 enhanced IDE HDD
- 1.44M HDD
- 14" non-interlaced monitor
- 1M Trident 9680 PCI video card
- MS mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Windows 95

2 year parts and unlimited labour warranty!

SIM modules

- 1M 30pin \$15
- 4M 30pin \$55
- 4M 72pin \$45
- 4M 72pin EDO \$39
- 8M 72pin \$73
- 8M 72pin EDO \$65
- 16M 72pin \$145
- 16M 72pin EDO \$135
- 32M 72pin EDO \$259

Modems

- KTX 33.6K ext. \$149
- Dynalink 33.6K int. \$139
- Dynalink 33.6K ext. \$159
- Commwave 33.6K int. \$119
- Banksia 33.6K int. \$209
- Banksia 33.6K ext. \$249
- Netcomm 33.6K int. \$179
- Netcomm 33.6K ext. \$249

Hyundai monitors

- Conforms to MPR II low radiation specification.
- DeluxScan 14 Plus \$395
- DeluxScan 15 Pro \$485
- DeluxScan 17 \$945
- DeluxScan 21 \$2395

Iomega ZIP drives

Zip, the easiest way to backup your stuff.



\$249

- Zip Accessories:
- Zip Disks \$22
- Zip Disk Organizer \$17
- Zip Carry Case \$39
- Zip Zoom SCSI Card \$89



AMD 686-P133 CPU

& CigaByte ATU board

Including fan & heatsink!

\$279

Canon Colour Printers

- BJC-210 Economical bubble jet printer \$269
- BJC-4200 Professional bubble jet printer \$359

Colour flatbed scanner

Specifications:

- A4 size
- Up to 24-bit true colour scanning
- Scan from 75 to 4800DPI!
- Fast single pass scanning
- SCSI interface Included*
- TWAIN compatible
- *also available with Parallel Port interface. Ideal for notebooks!



\$339

CD-ROM drives

- 10X \$149
- 12X \$169
- 16X \$189

High performance graphics cards

- Matrox Mystique 2M SGRAM \$279
- Matrox Millenium 2M VRAM \$339
- Diamond Stealth 3D 2M EDO \$169
- Diamond Stealth Edge 3D 2M VRAM \$469
- Hercules Terminator 3D 2M EDO \$269
- Hercules Dynamite 128 2M MDRAM \$269

Complete computer system

Multimedia *Internet ready* *Printer*
Ideal for first time buyers!

- Genuine Intel Pentium-133MHz CPU
- 512K pipeline cache
- 16M EDO RAM
- 1.6G mode 4 HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 2M Tseng ET6000+ PCI video card
- 15" KTX monitor
- 12X speed CD-ROM drive
- Taskmaster Pro full duplex sound with 33.6K fax/modem
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- Windows 95
- Microsoft CD bundle
- Canon BJC-210 colour printer

\$2489



The Electronic & Computer Stores

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Prices and specifications subject to change without notice. E & OE.